

GANDHI IS INDIA

J. S. BRIGHT

PUBLISHED BY THE

INDIAN PRINTING WORKS
KACHERI ROAD LAHORE

Books Edited by Mr. J. S. Bright :

IMPORTANT SPEECHES OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

IMPORTANT SPEECHES AND WRITINGS OF SUBHAS BOSE

LIFE OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU—In Words & Pictures

SUBHAS BOSE AND HIS IDEAS

JAWAHARLAL : A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

GANDHI IS INDIA

INDIA ON THE MARCH

(Selected Writings & Statements of Jawaharlal)

EDITED BY JAG PARVESH CHANDER

TEACHINGS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

(Foreword by Babu Rajendra Prasad)

TAGORE AND GANDHI ARGUE .

ETHICS OF FASTING

GITA THE MOTHER

THE UNSEEN POWER

THE GOOD LIFE

GANDHI AGAINST FASCISM

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IN INDIA

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1 Suppld.	12.11.15	366
2 Price.	1 Rs.	25/-
3 Grant.	1 Rs.	10/165
4 Cha.	1 Rs.	14/13
5 Acc.	1 Rs.	18/00
6 Cat.	1 Rs.	16/466

Printed and Published by Mr. Narain Das Kumar at the Indian Printing Works
Kachtri Road, Lahore—May, 1947.

MAHATMA'S PRAYERS

The way of the Lord is open only to the heroes, to
cowards it is fast short

Give up thy life and all that thou hast, so thou
mayst assume the name of the Lord

Only he who leaves his son, his wife, his riches, and
his life, shall drink from the vessel of God

He that would fish for pearls must dive into the
deepest depths of the sea and take his life in his
hands

Death affrights him not: he forgets all the misery of
body and soul

He who stands hesitating on the bank and fears to
dive, gains nought

But the path of love is trial by fire. The coward
shrinks back from it

He who dares the leap into the fire, attains to
everlasting bliss—

Another similar hymn reads:

Lord, preserve me from looking on things which
arouse evil thoughts. It were better for me to be
blind

Lord, preserve me from soiling my lips with impure
words. It were better for me to be dumb

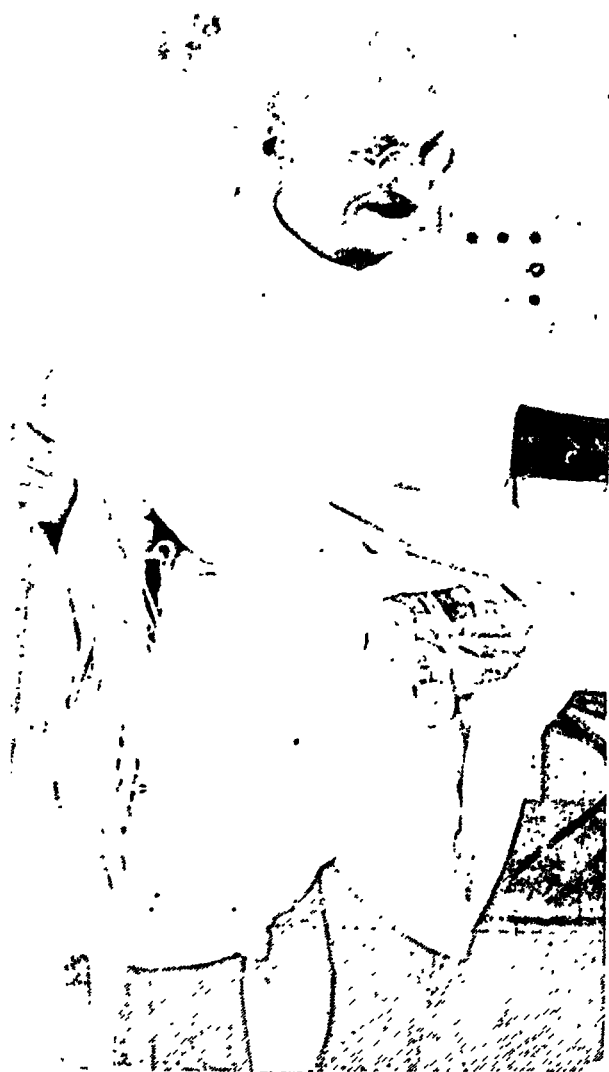
Lord, preserve me from hearing any word of slander
and insult. It were better for me to be deaf

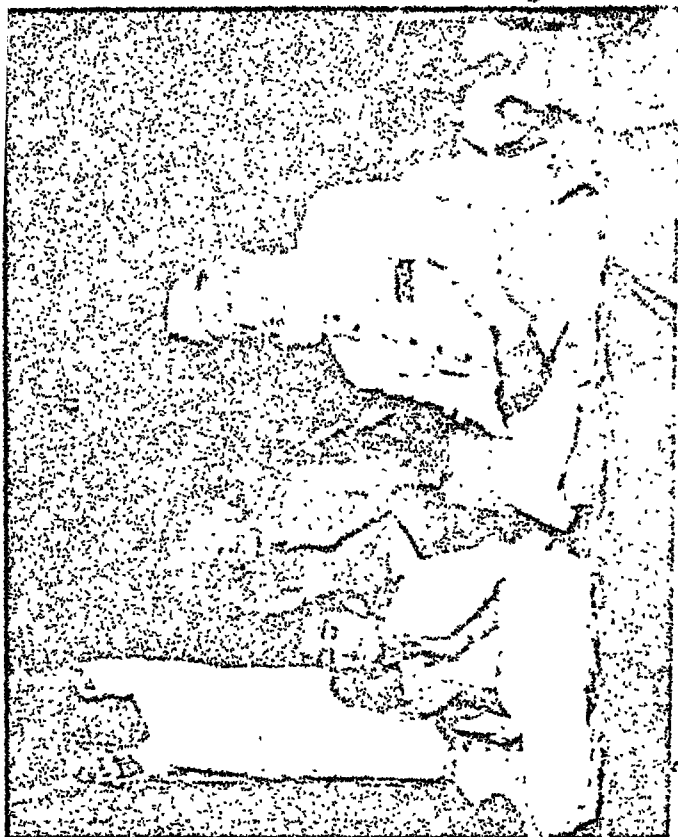
Lord, preserve me from looking with desire on any
of those who should be my sisters. It were better
for me to be dead.

C. F. ANDREWS.

"SHOWING THE WATCH"

Gandhiji is one of the most punctual men in the world and every minute of his working-day is booked. Louis Fischer says that it was only at Wardha that he was "shown the watch."





PREFACE

Gandhi is India and India is Gandhi. Nobody can deny the truth of this statement. Mahatma Gandhi is the perfect flower of India's noblest aspirations, and the foreign countries know Mother India through his affectionate voice of non-violence. By advocating a spiritual solution of the world's problems, Mahatma Gandhi has become the mouthpiece of the ancient sages of India.

In this book an effort has been made to present the actions and reactions of Mahatma Gandhi upon his country. A glimpse has been given of India before the Congress, and how Gandhiji has lifted the Congress from its ineffective cradle and put it in the seat of power at New Delhi in the form of the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly.

The book also studies the private life of Mahatma Gandhi and its wholesome influence upon the social and political life of India. The book tells how Gandhiji is tackling the communal problems of India with particular reference to the recent riots and the magnificent work that is still being done by him in East Bengal.

The book is a first-hand study, because it is based on the personal experiences of thousands of Indian and foreign leaders and journalists who have spent months with Gandhi, and this is the first book on Gandhi which nutshells essays and books written on Gandhi during the four decades. This book is a kernel of the most voluminous literature on Mahatma Gandhi, which if collected together will fill the shelves of a sky-scraper in New York!

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CHAPTER I

Gandhi is India

*How goes the night?
Midnight has still to come.
Down in the court the torch is blazing bright;
I hear far off the throbbing of the drum.*

*How goes the night?
The night is not yet gone.
I hear the trumpets blowing in the height;
The torch is paling in the coming dawn.*

*How goes the night?
The night is past and done.
The torch is smoking in the morning light,
The dragon banner floating in the sun.*

—AN ANCIENT CHINESE FOLKSONG

[Translated by Helen Waddell from the *Shi King*, or the Chinese Book of Odes, compiled by Confucius in 500 B. C.]

MAHATMA GANDHI has seen the midnight and the morning of India's black night of thralldom in a single span of life, so that he has now become identified with the very struggle for freedom of the masses of India, and this fact has been acknowledged by the press and politicians the world over.

I

THE LAND OF GANDHI

INDIA has been commonly known in Europe as "the land of Gandhi". I cannot forget my little conversation with the Italian attendant at the porch at Vatican Palace. After I signed my name and gave my address, he said to me:

"India?"

"Yes," I said.

"Gandhi?"

WHEN this came with a smile, I had to say yes, knowing he meant the country of Gandhiji. This was again and again my experience in Italy nine years ago. Suddenly visiting a negro elementary school on the roadside in a southern state of U. S. A. two years ago.....a girl in the upper class jumped up and asked, "Tell us about Mr. Gandhi".

V. S. AZARIAH

II

THE TIMELESS LAND.

"NOT only in India 'that timeless land' but throughout the world, he has given living witness to the best the philosophy has had to say upon the object towards which all religion that is worthy of the name is directed and upon the echo which its summons to seek perfection finds in the individual soul".

J. H. MUIRHEAD

III

MAHATMA GANDHI KI JAI!

"WHENEVER Gandhi travels through the country by rail in the poorest class, or, clad in his beggar's garments, staff in hand, wanders barefoot from town to town, from village to village masses of people, often tens of thousands, gather around him, follow him, and wait patiently for a word from the Master's lips, or for the moment when he will grant them the sight of his face in accordance with the Indian custom of "Dharsan". They flock in great crowds to the railway carriage or the hut where Gandhi is, sing hymns in his honour and greet him with the national shout of triumph, "Mahatma Gandhi-ki-Jai!" If he spends the night in a village or in the open air, crowds make pilgrimages to him as to a saint. The Parsee priests in their fire-temples pray for his well-being; many Hindus regard him as a reincarnation of Shri Krishna and revere him as divine; countless popular prints in which Gandhi is represented as Shri Krishna are in circulation throughout the whole of India".

RENE FULOP MILLER

IV

THE MECCA

"THE English Governor, Mr. Lloyd, one of Gandhi's fiercest enemies, declared after his arrest that he must be buried alive in prison and no one allowed access to him, or his cell would soon become a Mecca for the whole world.

V

THE FATHER FOUGHT FIRST

GANDHI'S father was a dewan or finance minister and fell into disfavour. He there-upon he took himself to Rajkot, where he rose rapidly in the favour of the ruler and was loaded with presents. On one occasion, when the English representative spoke ungracefully of the prince in his presence, Gandhi's father at once took him sharply to task. The all-powerful representative demanded an apology, and when Gandhi's father categorically refused to make one, had him arrested. But he did not get the apology demanded, and in the end had to let the matter slide.

VI

EXPERIMENTS WITH TRUTH

Mr. GANDHI has told the story of his early life in an autobiography which may stand alongside of Rousseau's Confession for candour of intimate self-revelation. He was born in 1862 at Porbandar, the capital of an Indian State in Kathiawar, of respectable middle-class parents in an orthodox family of Vaishnava Hindus, which for two generations had given Diwans or Prime Ministers to the Porbandar and other neighbouring Indian States. His parents were both deeply religious.

VII

GANDHI AND LENIN

"I BELIEVE that both these men have given an indestructible message to the world. A message that heartens those who were rejected and downtrodden. A message that has enabled the humble to raise their heads, and recognize their place in the sun".

CLARE SHERIDAN

VIII

THE METHOD OF GANDHI

THE outlook of India, which the western businessman has so contemptuously dismissed as inefficient, may yet prove more enduring than that of grasping, war-torn Europe: it may come nearer to the heart of mankind than the screams of Hitler and the grunt of Churchill. The only method of avoiding war is the method of Gandhi: let the planners and the politicians prate as they will, there is no alternative, none.

Humanity does sometimes move quite quickly, as in Russia, as indeed in Europe today, eastern and western ideas may not combine successfully except between equal partners India has not retreated so far from the goal of self-government that previous progress looks as it might have been based on an ultimate hypocrisy.

Whether India can stand—that is find her own recipe for happiness—alone, we don't know: and history will not inform us because there is nothing to show what India, left to herself, would have done with the discoveries and inventions of the past hundred years, or, for that matter, in what way she would herself have developed.

Industrialisation could undoubtedly give India up-to-date houses and plumbing and electric kitchens and chairs and tables, and plaster the remotest village with new signs: it could unquestionably "raise the standard of living" but I am still inclined to think that that is a debatable aim. What, I hope, is not debatable, is that war is an evil thing: what may well be true is that non-violence is its only permanent cure.

LIONEL FIELDON

IX

THE SWORD OF PEACE

GANDHIJI has deliberately represented as being and is so imagined by millions of decent English folk—anti-British, pro-Japanese, the main, if not the only wrecker of the Cripp Proposals, a saboteur, a deliberate instigator of violence, a defeatist. I suppose that Pilate, had he possessed the advantages of press and wireless, might have thought of similar lines."

Gandhi has given his life to a constant and unrelenting fight against two things—aggression and violence. It is a fight to a finish: he has come to

bring not peace but a sword, in the sense that Christ also did. Gandhi sees humanity as a whole, and bears no malice to any section of it: the time will come when it will be seen how, again and again, he prevented violent action against the British whom after all, he had more reason to dislike than of any other nation.

"Gandhi, languishing in jail at seventy-five; while America and Britain hasten to hustle India into modernisation, may not live to see anything but the apparent failure of his mission as other prophets have done, but an idea which is right is more enduring than panzers or politicians."

"I have a notion that the legend of Gandhi may yet be a flaming inspiration to the millions of the West. But it is for the time being at least the East, which provides the fruitful soil because the East has not yet fallen prone, as the West has done, before the Golden Calf. And it may be for the East once again, to show mankind that human happiness does not depend on that particular form of worship, and that the conquest of materialism is also the conquest of war."

LIONEL FIELDON

X

FIND YOUR SOULS

"HE has helped the people of India to find their souls".

ARTHUR H. COMPTON

XI

"THE KEY NOTE OF GANDHI"

THE exploitation of mass superstition has, in fact, throughout been the keynote of Gandhi's political strategy. It was indeed an inevitable corollary on the principle of civil disobedience. Without the support of the masses this newly developed weapon of revolution would have been useless. If he had not accepted Hinduism and all it stands for, he would have appealed in vain to the masses to follow him. It is Hindu mass support that has given him his outstanding position in Indian politics; until that support was assured Congress was a bourgeois movement, representing a tiny minority of the people; unsupported by the lower ranks of society; their claim to wield supreme power rested on the flimsiest moral basis; the lure of a Hindu raj, which Gandhi promised them with mass support if they would adopt his leadership, was too strong to be resisted.

The India Act of 1935 opened out splendid prospects to the damagogue. The Hindu rural masses in the predominantly Hindu provinces were at Gandhi's feet; to sweep the board at the elections he had only to renew his promise of a golden age given fifteen years earlier when he started his first civil disobedience movement.

Never in history has a powerful government endured with such a degree of patience a campaign of calumny, of hate, of the kind that Gandhi let loose against British rule. Not only was British imperialism painted in the blackest of colours, western

civilisation itself and all it implied of moral and material progress was anathema in the Gandhian creed.

His friends and admirers abroad imagine that he aims at instituting a democratic regime based on British principles. It is doubtful. Gandhi is not a democrat in the British or American sense of the term. He regards the British system with a prejudiced eye. For the British Parliament he has little but contempt. He compares the Mother of Parliament to a sterile woman and a prostitute. Sterile because, in his view, 'it has not yet of its own accord done' a single good thing. It is like a prostitute because it is under the control of ministers who change from time to time".

SIR WILLIAM BARTON

XII

DEEP SPIRITUAL FORCE

"WHATEVER may, at any time, have been the differences dividing his thought and my own, I have never failed to recognise the deep spiritual force by which he is moved, and which has always led him to count no sacrifice too great for the causes in which he believes."

VISCOUNT HALIFAX

c

XIII

CONGRESS IS GANDHI

"CONGRESS," says Nehru, "is Gandhi. Congress is of his making." Only his magic influence holds toge-

Hindus. Would-be supporters of the Government and the services generally feel that ultimately Government will give way to Congress and that if they have meanwhile acted against its interests they may be victimised when the party comes into its own. The result is to weaken the Government's position.

SIR W. BARTON.

XIV

THE HALL-MARK OF GREATNESS

"HE always acts as a great human, with deep sympathy for men of all classes and all races and especially for the under-dog. His outlook has nothing sectional about it, but is distinguished by that universal and eternal human which is the hall-mark of true greatness of spirit."

RT. HON. J. C. SMUTS

It is important for India and Asia generally to understand the West. The West is becoming a wild West. It cannot tame its lust for power and wealth. This lust has become a major threat to Western democracy.

Fascism challenged democracy. Fascist nations were defeated. But no mood of triumph or joy has gripped victorious countries. They are, in fact, very depressed and seriously worried about their future. Democracy is again challenged, challenged not only by Russian totalitarianism but challenged equally by weakness and short-comings within democracies themselves.

"Modestly you offer your services", Louis said in a spirit of friendly respectful banter.

"Yes," he replied, "but I am a mere Asiatic". He chuckled. "A mere Asiatic."

"Ah," I observed "but it is just Asia, just the East may offer the West a guiding light in the current emergency."

After the First World War, Germany in defeat turned to the mysticism of Dostoyevsky, the great novelist of Czarist Russia and to the philosophies of India and China. Arthur Holitscher, a prominent German journalist, who knew Lenin, came to India and wrote a book entitled "Lenin and Gandhi." Indians, among them Tagore and Jawaharlal Nehru, visited Soviet Russia. They were searching for the synthesis between India and Russia.

To-day many Indians and many occidentals, including Pearl Buck, incline to the view (or is it the hope?) that India is itself a synthesis of East and West. I know of no leader or public figure on the planet whose career and ideas are more opposed to Gandhi than Stalin. Commissar and Yogi do not mix. How can word be free, how can minds be free, how can there be honesty or ethics when all minds and all words are harnessed to the purposes of one party and one state which proscribe criticism even by their supporters? In Russia words, minds and men are sacrificed on the altar of the God of power. In the democracy words, minds and men are often sacrificed on the altars of the gods of power and wealth. This is the awful dilemma which faces the West.

Perhaps we should explore the possibility of a synthesis between India and the West. Perhaps India should commence seeing herself in this helpful creative role. No country can live alone any more than an individual can live alone. If the West loses its freedom, India, even a free India may, ultimately, lose its freedom, for no country is free when its citizens are not free.

The West is now engaged in an instinctive semi-sub-conscious un-co-ordinated struggle against the perils of totalitarian dictatorship, which would glorify and magnify Governments while crushing the soul and liberty of individuals. In this struggle the rich mighty West stands sorely in need of the thin, bony hand of poor India. India, however, must be true to itself.

The Portuguese, the French and the British brought the West to India. Now the West has become a part of India.

But the British never become a part of India. They are in India but are not of India. The Indians accepted what the British brought. They never accepted the British. Nor did the British accept the Indians. The British rule over the Indians; they don't live with the Indians. Kipling's "East is East, West is West and never the twain shall meet" means that the English and the Indians cannot mix because the master cannot mix up with the servants whom he has to rule.

The West needs Gandhi. A Gandhian India needs that which is good and democratic in the West.

The West has hurt India. Nevertheless, India must not cut itself off from the West. The chains that bind India to the West must be shattered. But after that there will be room for new bonds of mutual interest, mutual respect and friendship.

XV

A SUPERB JUDGE

"HE is a superb judge of other men. His humanity is one of the profoundest things that history has seen. He has pity and love for every race, and most of all for the poor and oppressed."

EDWARD THOMPSON

XVI

THE RULER OF INDIA

"WHEN he lay ill in the hospital at Poona, an English friend of the Mahatma, wrote of him: Here lies the ruler of India, whose influence far surpasses that of the Imperial power. Long after the names of the Governors who now reside in the palaces at Delhi are forgotten, his name will still be honoured and exalted among the people, the memory of Mahatma Gandhi will be handed down for ever to their children by all the mothers of India, as the memory of one of the greatest, a saint and a redeemer."

C. F. ANDREW'S

“THE SAINT AND THE STATESMAN”

There is a deep abiding golden link of affection between the Saint of Wardha and the Statesman of New Delhi. Every step of Pandit Nehru in the Interim Government is sanctioned by Gandhiji.

..THE SAINT AND THE SILENT..

to meet the proposed modification to limit notebook guidance, such as in the proposed amendments to the Code of Federal Regulations, 28 CFR 1.101, 1.102, 1.103, 1.104, 1.105, 1.106, 1.107, 1.108, 1.109, 1.110, 1.111, 1.112, 1.113, 1.114, 1.115, 1.116, 1.117, 1.118, 1.119, 1.120, 1.121, 1.122, 1.123, 1.124, 1.125, 1.126, 1.127, 1.128, 1.129, 1.130, 1.131, 1.132, 1.133, 1.134, 1.135, 1.136, 1.137, 1.138, 1.139, 1.140, 1.141, 1.142, 1.143, 1.144, 1.145, 1.146, 1.147, 1.148, 1.149, 1.150, 1.151, 1.152, 1.153, 1.154, 1.155, 1.156, 1.157, 1.158, 1.159, 1.160, 1.161, 1.162, 1.163, 1.164, 1.165, 1.166, 1.167, 1.168, 1.169, 1.170, 1.171, 1.172, 1.173, 1.174, 1.175, 1.176, 1.177, 1.178, 1.179, 1.180, 1.181, 1.182, 1.183, 1.184, 1.185, 1.186, 1.187, 1.188, 1.189, 1.190, 1.191, 1.192, 1.193, 1.194, 1.195, 1.196, 1.197, 1.198, 1.199, 1.200, 1.201, 1.202, 1.203, 1.204, 1.205, 1.206, 1.207, 1.208, 1.209, 1.210, 1.211, 1.212, 1.213, 1.214, 1.215, 1.216, 1.217, 1.218, 1.219, 1.220, 1.221, 1.222, 1.223, 1.224, 1.225, 1.226, 1.227, 1.228, 1.229, 1.230, 1.231, 1.232, 1.233, 1.234, 1.235, 1.236, 1.237, 1.238, 1.239, 1.240, 1.241, 1.242, 1.243, 1.244, 1.245, 1.246, 1.247, 1.248, 1.249, 1.250, 1.251, 1.252, 1.253, 1.254, 1.255, 1.256, 1.257, 1.258, 1.259, 1.260, 1.261, 1.262, 1.263, 1.264, 1.265, 1.266, 1.267, 1.268, 1.269, 1.270, 1.271, 1.272, 1.273, 1.274, 1.275, 1.276, 1.277, 1.278, 1.279, 1.280, 1.281, 1.282, 1.283, 1.284, 1.285, 1.286, 1.287, 1.288, 1.289, 1.290, 1.291, 1.292, 1.293, 1.294, 1.295, 1.296, 1.297, 1.298, 1.299, 1.300, 1.301, 1.302, 1.303, 1.304, 1.305, 1.306, 1.307, 1.308, 1.309, 1.310, 1.311, 1.312, 1.313, 1.314, 1.315, 1.316, 1.317, 1.318, 1.319, 1.320, 1.321, 1.322, 1.323, 1.324, 1.325, 1.326, 1.327, 1.328, 1.329, 1.330, 1.331, 1.332, 1.333, 1.334, 1.335, 1.336, 1.337, 1.338, 1.339, 1.340, 1.341, 1.342, 1.343, 1.344, 1.345, 1.346, 1.347, 1.348, 1.349, 1.350, 1.351, 1.352, 1.353, 1.354, 1.355, 1.356, 1.357, 1.358, 1.359, 1.360, 1.361, 1.362, 1.363, 1.364, 1.365, 1.366, 1.367, 1.368, 1.369, 1.370, 1.371, 1.372, 1.373, 1.374, 1.375, 1.376, 1.377, 1.378, 1.379, 1.380, 1.381, 1.382, 1.383, 1.384, 1.385, 1.386, 1.387, 1.388, 1.389, 1.390, 1.391, 1.392, 1.393, 1.394, 1.395, 1.396, 1.397, 1.398, 1.399, 1.400, 1.401, 1.402, 1.403, 1.404, 1.405, 1.406, 1.407, 1.408, 1.409, 1.410, 1.411, 1.412, 1.413, 1.414, 1.415, 1.416, 1.417, 1.418, 1.419, 1.420, 1.421, 1.422, 1.423, 1.424, 1.425, 1.426, 1.427, 1.428, 1.429, 1.430, 1.431, 1.432, 1.433, 1.434, 1.435, 1.436, 1.437, 1.438, 1.439, 1.440, 1.441, 1.442, 1.443, 1.444, 1.445, 1.446, 1.447, 1.448, 1.449, 1.450, 1.451, 1.452, 1.453, 1.454, 1.455, 1.456, 1.457, 1.458, 1.459, 1.460, 1.461, 1.462, 1.463, 1.464, 1.465, 1.466, 1.467, 1.468, 1.469, 1.470, 1.471, 1.472, 1.473, 1.474, 1.475, 1.476, 1.477, 1.478, 1.479, 1.480, 1.481, 1.482, 1.483, 1.484, 1.485, 1.486, 1.487, 1.488, 1.489, 1.490, 1.491, 1.492, 1.493, 1.494, 1.495, 1.496, 1.497, 1.498, 1.499, 1.500, 1.501, 1.502, 1.503, 1.504, 1.505, 1.506, 1.507, 1.508, 1.509, 1.510, 1.511, 1.512, 1.513, 1.514, 1.515, 1.516, 1.517, 1.518, 1.519, 1.520, 1.521, 1.522, 1.523, 1.524, 1.525, 1.526, 1.527, 1.528, 1.529, 1.530, 1.531, 1.532, 1.533, 1.534, 1.535, 1.536, 1.537, 1.538, 1.539, 1.540, 1.541, 1.542, 1.543, 1.544, 1.545, 1.546, 1.547, 1.548, 1.549, 1.550, 1.551, 1.552, 1.553, 1.554, 1.555, 1.556, 1.557, 1.558, 1.559, 1.560, 1.561, 1.562, 1.563, 1.564, 1.565, 1.566, 1.567, 1.568, 1.569, 1.570, 1.571, 1.572, 1.573, 1.574, 1.575, 1.576, 1.577, 1.578, 1.579, 1.580, 1.581, 1.582, 1.583, 1.584, 1.585, 1.586, 1.587, 1.588, 1.589, 1.590, 1.591, 1.592, 1.593, 1.594, 1.595, 1.596, 1.597, 1.598, 1.599, 1.600, 1.601, 1.602, 1.603, 1.604, 1.605, 1.606, 1.607, 1.608, 1.609, 1.610, 1.611, 1.612, 1.613, 1.614, 1.615, 1.616, 1.617, 1.618, 1.619, 1.620, 1.621, 1.622, 1.623, 1.624, 1.625, 1.626, 1.627, 1.628, 1.629, 1.630, 1.631, 1.632, 1.633, 1.634, 1.635, 1.636, 1.637, 1.638, 1.639, 1.640, 1.641, 1.642, 1.643, 1.644, 1.645, 1.646, 1.647, 1.648, 1.649, 1.650, 1.651, 1.652, 1.653, 1.654, 1.655, 1.656, 1.657, 1.658, 1.659, 1.660, 1.661, 1.662, 1.663, 1.664, 1.665, 1.666, 1.667, 1.668, 1.669, 1.670, 1.671, 1.672, 1.673, 1.674, 1.675, 1.676, 1.677, 1.678, 1.679, 1.680, 1.681,



Between Fire and Water : Mahatma Gandhi finds himself nicely sandwiched between Aruna Asaf Ali's fire of socialism and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur's devotion to the ideals of non-violence

XVII

UNIQUE IN THE WORLD

GANDHI is more than a religious revivalist and a holy man, he is a Mahatma, to whom almost divine attributes are ascribed; there is no one like him in the world to-day.

PERCIVAL LONDON

XVIII

SATYAGRAHA FOR BRITAIN

"IF Britain's armament-building programme sets other peoples following her, why could not her organized efforts at the practice of Satyagraha also energize others to do the same? Let her organize to walk 'the way of peace that comes from a simple and godly life'."

SOPHIA WADIA

XIX

APOSTLE PAUL

THIS man reminds me of the Apostle Paul, an English Government official. Whatever he is, he is no common man; be he saviour or wrecker, he arrests attention and demands a hearing. No common man.

AN ENGLISH REPORTER

XX

TOO GREAT, TOO HIGH

PROSPER Bunarelli, of the New York World Magazine, tells of a conversation he had with a Hindu. In reply to a question whether he knew Gandhi personally he made a gesture and spoke "like one starting a holy thesis". "I do not know Gandhi personally. He is too great, too high." "That," remarks Bunarelli, "was the motive that sounded endlessly in his talk, an impassioned mystic reverence for the saint, which I gathered was the feeling of the millions in India, from the drudging labourers on rice plantations to the Hindu graduates of English universities. The figure of Gandhi appeared not that of an earthing of bread and salt, but of a holy one on a shining height, and recalled the ascetic who walks in penance and truth and behind whom trail worshippers by thousands".

PROSPER BUNARELLI

XXI

ELUSIVE PERSONALITY

"GANDHI'S South Africa comrade gives it up as hopeless to find words when he tries to describe the wonder of Gandhi. 'You cannot say, this is he, or that is he. All you can say with certainty is that he is here, he is there. Everywhere his influence reigns, his authority rules, his elusive personality pervades. This must be so, for it is true of all great men that they

are incalculable, beyond definition. They partake of the nature of the Illimitable and Eternal, from which they have sprung and to which they are bound'."

J. POLAK

XXII

WARM KINDNESS

"HIS noble spirit and warm human kindness have endeared him to all humanitarians throughout the world."

UPTON SINCLAIR

XXIII

IN A BRITISH PRISON

Gandhi has always regarded love as the only weapon against evil. He has been attacked and assaulted three times by the mob once almost fatally—and left lying in the gutter; but he was never angry with those who attacked him. He has been in prison many times, and there too he showed an unshakable amiability towards all the officials. Always, both in the fortress at Johannesburg and behind the bars of the gloomy Yervada prison, he submitted without murmuring or complaint to all the rules and maintained the strictest discipline even in the face of the most insolent demands of the prison officials. He also exhorted his fellow prisoners not to treat their warders as enemies, but as fellowmen and brothers: "Our gentlemanly behaviour is bound to disarm all suspicion or bitterness on the part of our warders. Our own self-respect obliges us to obey the prison rules willingly."

XXIV

THE CRUCIFIED SAVIOUR

THE Bishop of Madras, in a public address, testified to Gandhi's moral superiority over his persecutors. "I frankly confess, although it deeply grieves me to say it," he declared, "that I see in Mr. Gandhi, the patient sufferer for the cause of righteousness and mercy, a truer representative of the crucified Saviour than the men who have thrown him into prison and yet call themselves by the names of Christ".

Writing in "*Harijan*" Mahatma Gandhi says:

According to Reuters, picked Indians, men and women, headed by Dr. Naicker, commenced Satyagraha (in South Africa popularly known as passive resistance) on June 14th in respect of the segregation law of the Union Parliament of South Africa. The same agency further reports that neither the Government nor the municipality had taken any action against the passive resisters but that some Whites of Durban had taken the execution of the law into their own hands by raiding the camp at night, cutting down tents and carrying them away. "A band of hundred young white men broke through the cordon of fifty Indian passive resisters, pulled down the tents and dragged them away torn. Some camp stretchers were smashed and blankets and pillows removed. Two women resisters were involved in the melee. They are stated to have been kicked but not injured.

The papers-report that, after three days of hooliganism, the borough police had posted themselves near

the scene of passive resistance and warned the hooligans against molesting the resisters and terrorizing them into submission. This is heartening news.

Let us hope that it can be taken at its full value and that the protection means fullest protection against lawlessness, sporadic or organized. Organized popular lawlessness is known as lynching so shamelessly frequent in America. Before the removal of Segregation Law was passed, White-men, known to be respectable, had carried anti-Asiatic agitation to the point of frenzy. Not satisfied with their triumph in having legislation compelling segregation passed, probably beyond expectation, the more advanced section among the agitators have become the executioners of their own laws. They do not know that they are thereby defaming the white man's name.

My appeal to the white men and women who have regard for laws for which they have voted is that they should create public opinion against hooliganism and Lynch Law. Passive resistance is aimed at removal in a most approved manner of bad laws, customs or other evils and is designed to be a complete and effective substitute for forcible methods, including hooliganism and Lynch Law. It is an appeal to the heart of man. Often reason fails. It is dwarfed by Self. The theory is that an adequate appeal to the heart never fails. Seeming failure is not of the law of satyagraha but of incompetence of the satyagraha by whatever cause induced. It may not be possible to give a complete historical instance. The name of Jesus at once comes to the lips.

It is an instance of brilliant failure. And he has been acclaimed in the West as prince of passive resisters. I showed years ago in South Africa that the adjective passive was a misnomer, at least as applied to Jesus. He was the most active resister known perhaps to history. His was non-violence par excellence. But I must no longer stray from my main subject. It is the resistance of the Jesus type that the white hooligans are seeking to thwart.

Let us hope that our countrymen's heroic resistance will not only shame the hooligans into silence but prove the precursor of the repeal of the law that disfigures the statute book of South Africa.

The real White man's burden is not insolently to dominate coloured or black people under the guise of protection. It is to desist from the hypocrisy which is eating into them. It is time White men learnt to treat every human being as their equal. There is no mystery about whiteness of the skin. It has repeatedly been proved that given equal opportunity, a man, be he of any colour or country, is fully equal to any other.

Therefore, White men throughout the world and specially of India should act upon their fellowmen in South Africa and call upon them not to molest Indian resisters, who are bravely struggling to preserve the self-respect of Indians in the Union and the honour of their motherland. Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you. Or do they take in vain the name of Him who said this? Have they banished from their hearts the great coloured Asiatic,

who gave to the world the above message? Do they forget that the greatest of the teachers of mankind were all asiatics and did not possess a white face."

Under the caption "South Africa", Mahatma Gandhi writes in "*Harijan*":—

"The heroic struggle of the Indian settlers in South Africa continues with unabated zeal. It promises to be prolonged. The longer the resisters are made to suffer, the greater will be their glory and regard. It is true of all long suffering. What the Government of the Union of South Africa has done so deliberately is not going to be changed suddenly, even for the sufferings of the brave men and women. This is said not to damp the zeal of the fighters but to steel them for greater and longer suffering.

"That they must not expect the struggle to close quickly. Time runs always in favour of the sufferer, for the simple reason that tyranny becomes more and more exposed as it is continued. In reality struggle appears to have a longer lease of life or shorter when the result is a certainty."

XXV

"S. AFRICAN INDIANS ARE CONSIDERED COOLIES."

CONTINUING Mahatma Gandhi referred to the draft resolution of the Satyagraha movement now being carried on by Indians in South Africa. He said: "Indians in South Africa are being ill-treated, not because they are not whites, but because they are considered as

coolies. Indians in South Africa speak English and many of them are professional men like doctors and lawyers. In spite of all this, the South African Whites look upon them as coolies and call them as such. The Indians, of course, are in a minority and yet they are putting up a brave fight. They have no swords or guns, but they are determined to resist the anti-Indian laws by soul force, which is the only force available to Satyagrahis. * Durban owes its present prosperity to the Indians. The South African whites have agreed to give the Indians vote, though not as equals but as inferiors".

"The white civilisation in South Africa could not be kept alive by such means. Mahatma Gandhi wondered how a brave man like General Smuts who had praised Indians so much in the past could be instrumental in taking steps to deprive Indians of their elementary rights.

"One day the black races will rise to take vengeance on their white oppressors, unless some one presents to them the weapon of Satyagraha. But Satyagraha should be on clear, unequivocal and impersonal issue and capable of taking thousands in its fold."

This advice was tendered by Gandhiji, according to an article in the "*Harijan*" by Mr. Pyarelal entitled, "With South African Delegation", in the course of talks with the members of the South African delegation who saw Gandhiji at Delhi and sought his advice as to the starting of successful Satyagraha with a view to undoing the mischief with which Indian settlers in South Africa are threatened through land tenure legislation.

Gandhiji continued: "Their slogan to-day is no longer merely 'Asia for Asiatics or Africa for Africans' but unity of all exploited races of the earth. On India rests the burden of pointing the way to all the exploited races. She would not be able to bear that burden to-day if non-violence does not permeate us more than it does to-day. We have been trying to fit ourselves for that mission by giving wider bend to our struggle. India will become the torch-bearer of all oppressed and exploited races only if she can vindicate the principle of non-violence in her own case, not jettison it as soon as independence of foreign control is achieved".

Mahatma Gandhi, who was speaking at his last prayer meeting in Delhi before his departure for Poona, said that India was fast becoming the "Granary of the honour and dignity of the human race". It was in the fitness of things that if it fell to their lot to help the struggle of the gallant resisters of South Africa, the way must be clear before them. He felt that he would know when it was clear. In the meantime, he invoked the sympathy of the Viceroy and the White men and women of India to do their portion of the duty.

Mahatma Gandhi paid a tribute to the South African Passive Resisters' courage and suffering without retaliation in the midst of hooliganism which was daily increasing.

He said he was born in India but was made in South Africa of which he knew practically every province. He had passed there twenty years of his life when it was at its Meridian. He knew the White men of South Africa. He loved them as well as his countrymen. He felt ashamed of the hooliganism of some of

them. He had the fear that this hooliganism had the sympathy of the mass of the White men of the Union.

He fondly hoped that as the White men realised the deep strength and sincerity of the satyagrahis they would begin to respect them and transfer their sympathy to the suffering passive resisters.

At present he advised them to offer their heartiest prayers for God's mercy on the hooligans. He did not want them to send money to their countrymen. Money could not give them victory. They had money enough but a time might come when he might have to offer non-violent resistance of the purest type which it might become their duty to offer. India was fast becoming the granary of honour and dignity of the human race. It was in the fitness of things that if it fell to their lot to help the struggle of the gallant resisters of South Africa, the way must be clear before them. He felt that he would know when it was clear. In the meantime he invoked the sympathy of the Viceroy and the White men and women of India to do their portion of the duty.

XXVI

THE WEAVER OF SABARMATI

EUROPEANS as well as Indians have often compared Gandhi's fate with the Passion of Christ; many parallels have been sought between the son of the Carpenter of Nazareth and the "Weaver of Sabarmati". Broomfield, the English judge who reluctantly and almost against his will had to condemn Gandhi, was

more than once compared with Pontius Pilate, and the later incarceration of the Mahatma with the crucifixion of the Saviour. European papers declared that Gandhi's behaviour in court could only be compared with that of the Nazarene.

"A man who will live in history and in Heaven with Buddha, Socrates, and Jesus!"

XXVII

CHRIST RETURNED TO EARTH

FROM distant New York comes the voice of a Christian minister, who from the pulpit compares Gandhi with Jesus: "If I believed in a resurrection," states J. H. Holmes, the leader of an American sect, "I would—I say it in all reverence—look on Mahatma Gandhi as Christ returned to earth—I am not here thinking of the influence which the Nazarene, as Gandhi himself emphasized, exercised over him; I have in mind rather his whole mental spiritual nature and the wonderful example of his life. The soul of the Mahatma is the soul of Christ: its inner simplicity and purity, its mystical trust in the eternal verities, the peculiar blend of humility and arrogance, the profound understanding and infinite sympathy, the boundless joy in sacrifice, the steadfast idealism, the love for and trust in man and God, all show that the spiritual power of Jesus are again incarnate on earth."

XXVIII

AT SEVENTY

"BUT Gandhi, at seventy, feels himself sustained by the best forces which the race of men has ever produced, and is unwearied in completing what he began with his life. Of our discipleship he is sure."

ARNOLD ZWEIG

XXIX

THE TRIPLE CROWN

FOR my own part, three qualities are outstanding in his life. Such as I have watched it—first, and most important of all, his pure simplicity; second, his direct and keen appreciation of his own fundamentals; third, his absolutely unassuming fearlessness.

"There he is, wherever he is, leading a simple ordered life such as all can live, howsoever they may be circumstanced. He lives with the blazing light of fame ever shining upon. In the very midst of the glare he lives as most of us would do well to live. His soul is bare to the world. His habits are ever the same. And he knows how to use the power of the Silence, as few of the rest of us know how to use it.

GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

XXX

GANDHI'S GOAL

SANSKRIT literature is singularly rich in pregnant stanzas, which in youth are learned by every school-boy introduced to the sacred speech. One, it is permissible to think, became engraved on the memory of the young Gandhi, for it expresses the ideal to which his whole life has been consecrated.

ayam nijo paro veti ganana laghucetasam

ud aracaritanam tu vasudhaiva kntumbakam

"Only base minds reckon whether one be kin or stranger. Men of noble conduct take the whole world for their home."

A. B. KEITH

XXXI

THE HUMAN EARTHQUAKE

"MAHATMA GANDHI has raised up three hundred millions of his fellowmen, shaken the British Empire and inaugurated in human politics the most powerful movement that the world has seen for nearly two thousand years."

ROMAIN ROLLAND

XXXII

OH, INDIA? DO NOT FAIL

"CAN he convince the world? It is horrible to think that the belief in force, so prevalent in the West, may succeed in undermining the Mahatma's influence with his own countrymen and convince them that force alone can meet force. It will be the tragedy not of India only but of the British Empire and of the world. Not in Europe alone, nor in the West with its two great continents of the Americas, but in the East also, in Japan, even in Confucian pacifist China, the belief in violence gains ground. Can India keep the faith? Will she, alone in a warring world, hold to the truth, and show us the light. If so, the world is saved. If not——? Oh, India, do not fail!"

MISS MANDE ROYDEN

XXXIII

LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT!

"Mr. GANDHI asked Mr. Andrews and myself, to sing to him during his evening prayers one of our Christian hymns which had for long been a favourite with him.

Lead, kindly light, amid the encircling gloom.

Lead thou me on ;

The night is dark, and I am far from home,

Lead thou me on ;

Keep thou my feet ; I do not ask to see

The distant scene ; one step enough for me.

It was a moving experience, with the frail figure reclining on his couch in the subdued light of the room.

FOSS WESTOTT

CHAPTER II

India Before the Congress

*In sensuous coil
And heartless toil,
In sinuous course
And armoured force,
In savage harms
That yield to charms——
In all these things
Are the snakes like kings.*

*Uneven, rough,
And high enough,—
Yet low folk roam
Their flanks at home,
And wild things haunt
Them, hungry, gaunt—
In all these things
Are hills like kings.*

*The things that claw, and the things that gore
Are unreliable things;
And so is a man with a sword in his hand,
And rivers and women, and kings.*

ARTHUR W. RYDER

[Translated from the Panchatantra]

INDIA before the birth of the Indian National Congress lay prostrate before the imperial snakes. It will be futile to repeat the sad story of British rule in India. The following preface of William Digby to his remarkable book, 'India for the Indians—and for the British' will give you an insight into the conditions before February 1885 when the book was written:—

I

INDIA FOR THE INDIANS

I MAKE no apology for laying the statements contained in the following pages before the English public. I seek, in a manner, the shortcomings of which are more painfully evident to me than they can possibly be to my most severe critic,—to draw attention to some marked defects in our rule of India and to suggest certain changes, which, if carried out, I believe (for reasons fully stated) would ensure the good of England and India alike. Having had the good fortune to know intimately and to be honoured with the friendship of many Indians in their own country; having also, both in the past and at present, special opportunities of becoming acquainted with the state of affairs in many parts of India; and, moreover, appreciating the earnestness, and pathos even, of many Englishmen and English women to know something of their fellow-subjects in the East over and above what appears in official documents and officials speeches, I have had little choice but to write what I knew and felt, with the humble hope that the effort may not altogether be

fruitless. I have spoken because I have felt I could no longer keep silent without doing violence to my own sense of justice towards our fellow-subjects in India. I was emboldened to put my statements forth at the present time and in the popular (some Anglo-Indians very familiar with many of the facts I narrate may say; elementary)—form adopted for a very definite reason. I have great faith in the strong sense of justice of the English people as a whole, and in their passionate desire to right the wrongs with which they may be made acquainted. It is to them and for them this narrative of facts is written; to them this appeal for justice and consideration is made. 'Deep calleth unto Deep.' The great need experienced, the unfortunate position of political subjection suffered, by the Indian people at the hands of England, cannot fail, if once rightly apprehended, to touch the heart and to deeply move the emotions of the enfranchised millions of the United Kingdom. If two or three only of the Political Apostles of the day, whose power to educate and influence the mass of their countrymen is beyond question, would but master the Indian problem, themselves become transfused with a sense of the magnitude of the issues at stake and the possibility of a remedy being found, and would let their imagination be fired and their reason stirred, then, the time would be short between the recognition of the work to be done and a hearty attempt made to do it. The English people, rightly approached, are peculiarly susceptible to appeals to their higher nature; abundant instances in recent history testify to this. In matters concerning India this fact is especially true. When the fashionable Conservatism of Brighton deprived the late Mr.

THE FAILURE OF THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT

I BELIEVE, and I think I prove, that our Government of India has been very largely a failure, inasmuch as it has nowhere, in its own provinces, secured the greatest good of the greatest number. Instead of British-Indian administration being perfect in its performance, and its administrators having reason to cast their eyes to Heaven thankful that no evil has proceeded from anything that they have done, that same administration and those same administrators, trying to achieve the impossible, are responsible for a most serious failure.

Nevertheless the attitude which the majority of Anglo-Indians always assume is that of ecstatic admiration of themselves and their doings; an attitude of admiration; very naturally, is also adopted by English statesmen who obtain their evidence at second-hand. In their Government of India the British authorities are not content that they should be judged by an ordinary standard, by the standard which is allowed to be sufficient in respect to the government of other nations. They go above and beyond the canons of criticism which serve for testing the accomplishments of Parties in English political life. Philanthropy, they declare, is the key-note of all they do in India; the light by which they (officially) walk streams straight from Heaven is always with them, and prevents them ever taking a false step. They had, when an Order for the recognition in India of personal merit and public services was created, to find a motto. This was the motto chosen: 'Heaven's light our Guide'. Surely, it is seemly, considering the feebleness and limitations of human nature, for an ordinary citizen to shrink abashed from approval of such presumption. The more especially ought one to shrink abashed from a test of so high a character, seeing the results indicate that if a lower standard had been adopted greater success might have been achieved. If it be true that the man who throws a stone at the moon hits a higher object than he would have done if a hay rick had been his target it does not follow that the Indian administrator, who scorns the light of Earth and declares that for him the illumination of Heaven only will suffice, acts more justly and achieves higher ends than does he who thinks of what is fair between man and man, irrespective of race and colour, and who is

content with the light of earthly facts and earthly experience.

III

THE CONSEQUENCES OF FOREIGN DOMINATION

"MANY Englishmen will be loth to believe that justice is not being fully done in all departments of political life under British control in India. They will ask. Are, then, the honourable Englishmen we know worse than Turks in Macedonia that they are blind to the evils of their own rule, that they are oblivious of the consequences of foreign domination even though they themselves are the foreigners? I nowhere charge my countrymen in India with conscious injustice. I nowhere assert,—I should be the first to condemn the assertion in others,—that our countrymen, chosen for their high character and great ability, for service in the India Office, deliberately refuse to see things Indian from an Indian point of view. A little consideration will show that no surprise need be felt at such a condition of things as now exists. That things are as (in common with others who are jealous for our nation's good name and anxious for the recognition of Indian merit) I describe them to be, is perfectly natural,—only too natural. Men are not good enough for such unchecked rule as Englishmen possess in India. Angels from Heaven might degenerate were they as irresponsible rulers allowed free course over what they might be pleased to consider a degenerate and conquered race. It is certain that no body of Englishmen, — and

Englishmen are as good, taking them all round, as men are constituted nowadays,—can enjoy such power and position, without degeneracy in themselves and injustice towards others. This is why our rule in India is seemed with so much that will not bear the fierce scrutiny of public investigation, that fears investigation as night-birds fear the light. I do not blame or censure my countrymen who are in office in India for the ill they do there so much as I blame and censure the blindness and incapacity, born of the system and inseparable from it, which will not recognise the checks and balances and play of indigenous talent which so great a task as we have undertaken in India demands.'

IV

THE IRRESPONSIBILITY OF THE INDIA OFFICE

"THE India Office is largely to blame for the want, in Great Britain, of knowledge, or for the dissemination of incomplete and, therefore, incorrect, knowledge, respecting India affairs. It does some things it leaves undone more than it does. It is too prone to regard itself as the Executive of Anglo-Indian officials. It seldom or never appears to consider that it ought to exhibit as much solicitude for the interests of the native Indian as it does for the Anglo-Indian. Here, for example, is an instance of deliberate refusal to see facts in their true light. In 1875, Sir Louis Mallet, then permanent Under Secretary at the Indian Land Revenue, in the course of his argument, he said: 'If

there is any one thing which is wanting in any investigation of Indian problems, it is an approach of trustworthy and generally accepted facts. There is hardly a subject upon which the best authorities do not absolutely disagree as to the fundamental facts. I could mention the most startling instances, but they must be present to the minds of all of us. Now I am compelled to say that, since I have been connected with the India Office, I have found just as strong a repugnance to the adoption of any adequate measures for the collection of a comprehensive and well-digested set of facts as to the recognition of general principles. The only occasion upon which I had the misfortune of encountering the vehement opposition of some Members of Council, for whose opinions and experience I have the most unfeigned respect, was in my advocacy of Dr. Forbes Watson's proposals for an Industrial Survey.* No outside critic has ever said anything more damaging of the India Office than this. In presence of the passage and the reference to the 'vehement opposition' of the Council, I have serious misgivings as to whether, in what I have written, I ought, as I have been glad to do, to assume the good faith of the Anglo-Indian officials in all they have done or have left undone.*

V

THE INDIAN BUREAUCRACY

AN attitude in favour of the Indian and free from preconceived ideas such as I ask for, ought not merely to be possible; it ought to be in course of daily

practice. But here, again, to expect such conduct from the India Office, constituted as it is in England and joined to a pure despotism in India, is to expect too much. Official nature is worse than individual nature; it sinks to a low level more rapidly, and is incurable by ordinary means. As a rule, only revolutions which are bloody and are not of a rose-water character, are able to break through the concerted routine of a Permanent Department and to make it fully alive to all its duties. Lord Melbourne's piteous appeal, 'Can't you let it alone?' is the Old and New Testament of every permanent official. The India Office suffers from the melancholy disadvantage of being, at no time, brought to the judgment seat, either in England or in India, and compelled to account either for performance or for non-performance of duty. No greater evil can befall either man or institution than that his or its responsibility shall remain unchecked and criticism be dumb, or if voiceful be so feeble as to prove ineffectual. Unlike the great Departments affecting England principally, such as the Local Government Board or the Home Office, the India Office is above and beyond effective criticism or control. The Departments named find every detail of the work they undertake subjected to angry challenge in many cases it may be and the critical examination in all, in the localities and by the persons interested, while searching review in Parliament is not wanting. The India Office, on the other hand, although responsible for the righteous government of a population nearly seven times as large as that of the United Kingdom, is entirely uncontrolled, is subject to no check worth a snap of the fingers, is practically

irresponsible, and is largely influenced by that hideous anomaly in the free life of England, a Secret Council. This is bad for everybody interested: for the men in office most of all. They move in a groove out of which, even if they could, they do not want to get; they come, in very speedy manner, to regard things in a mechanical fashion, and wholly from The Office standpoint. In this way, so far as Indian matters are concerned, all affairs affecting British Provinces are hued with rose-colour never mind what their character; all matters concerning Indian States are limned in blackest tints, are seen with a jaundiced eye, let them be never so lightsome and healthy. The India Office, in its statement respecting India, is not to be implicitly remarking, consciously insincere, or desirous to be unjust. But,

‘Where self the trembling balance holds,
‘Tis seldom right adjusted.’

VI

INDIAN STATES BETTER THAN THE BRITISH INDIA

If I may direct the attention of my readers to any portions of the following pages more than others, it will be to parts II and III. Part II tells the story of thirty years' administration of a Native-Indian State. It furnishes, in the irresistible force of the facts recorded and the comparisons instituted, the most convincing proofs of the aptness of Indians for administrative works. The present Under-Secretary

of State for India, in a speech delivered by him at St. Bees, Cumberland, on December 29, 1884, said that the principle of our rule in India was this, 'So far as the people of India could be entrusted with the government of their own country it should be extended to them.' So far as a very humble individual, who speaks simply as a non-official British citizen, may do so, on behalf of the thousands of capable Indian Administrators, I call upon Mr. Cross to examine the facts of Native-Indian administration for himself. And if,—not satisfied with examining only such facts as may be placed before him by Anglo-Indian officials,—he proceeds to investigate the circumstances for himself, and should then find that the people of India can be entrusted with the 'government' of their own country, will he see that government is 'extended to them'? Or, if the powers-that-be in St. James' Park are too strong for him as they were too strong for Sir Louis Mallet, will he retire from the important position he occupies and join those who are endeavouring to ensure the fulfilment of the promises so frequently made to the Indian people? I claim that the facts I have gathered together amply prove that the Indians, as administrators in India, cannot merely do as well as British Officials, but that they actually do far better. To be consistent, Mr. Cross's next great speech in the House of Commons on Indian affairs, should contain an announcement that the policy of restoring India to the Indians will be once commenced and that not single further examination of Englishmen for the Civil Service will take place.

VII

THE COLOUR BAR IN INDIA

THE *Spectator* in one of its thoughtful articles on India, recognizing the 'New India (which has sprung into existence under the fostering care of Lord Ripon, remarks:—'we do not believe in the juxtaposition of Indians and Europeans in the same work, which is only impeded by their ineradicable differences of thought and method; but we would, as the time grew ripe, try fairly and fully the experiment of purely Native Administration in certain districts, would utilize the great native capacity for public works—they devised the tank system of irrigation, not we; they built the Taj and the Temple of Sheringham, not we; and they, and not we, founded Benares, Jeypore, and Umritsur,—and we would, in any possible way, for instance by leaving cavalry service to them, open to Indians a path to military distinction'. I venture to hope that the pages of this little book show that the 'experiment' desired has already been made. It was not made 'fairly and fully'; nevertheless it has succeeded completely, and its success is the more notable from the circumstance that it was achieved in the face of the most serious obstacles. There is no need for farther experiments, no need to wait until the time grows ripe; time never does, in the opinion of men situated as Anglo-Indian officials are situated, grow ripe for such experiments. If Englishmen will not, with the evidence available, believe in Indian capacity for administration, neither would they if one rose from the dead.

VIII

ABOLISH SALT TAX

IN PART III, an attempt is made to show how the reorganization of India could be carried out, without harm to any individual interest, and with great financial relief to the Indian taxpayer. When in August, 1884, laying the Indian Budget before the House of Commons, Mr. Cross, referring to the Salt Tax, remarked:—‘I am bound to say that the financier who shall be able to abolish this tax, or to carry further the reductions of it commenced three years ago, will confer on the people of India almost as great a boon as the repeal of the Corn Laws gave to the people of England.’ Did he choose to give the whole weight of his individual and official position to the task Mr. Cross might become the Cobden of India. Should, however, he bend his energies in that direction he will receive no countenance or support from the Office in which he occupies a most important position. The India Office takes too narrow and too contracted a view of its position and of its duties towards the people of India, while it makes no independent investigation of its own on any subject.

“Under such circumstances the most frightful injustice becomes possible, the most painful suffering may become chronic, at the hands and through the instrumentality of men who, personally, and in matters affecting their own countrymen, are the embodiments of justice and highly sensitive to even the appearance of agony. They lead two lives,—one personal and full of the richest flavour of intelligent,

cultured, and religious emotions, a stay and stimulus to their own character and to their friends; the other, official, in which all the nerves are numbed; the auditory nerve is slackened so that it cannot hear, the optic nerve is semi-paralyzed so that the eye can see only one set of facts. In a word, they are controlled by the system they administer and become its bond-slaves. Not the least melancholy feature in the situation is that they are unaware that a large part of their nature is atrophied. Without, as I have said, meaning so to be, they are the authors (more or less indirect) of suffering and pain, mental, social, and physical, at which if they heard so much as the faintest moan thereof in any people but the Indian people they would shudder and cease not to cry aloud and labour for reform. Now and then, the dense atmosphere which they breathe and which exercises so maleficent an influence upon them, is agitated by an admission coming, almost against his will, from one of their number. They have ears, they hear for a moment, and then turn to Pay and Pension Rules unheedingly. One asserts that under their governance forty millions of people are, year in and year out, in a state of chronic starvation, not knowing from January to December what it is to eat and be satisfied:—their worm (of hunger) dieth not. Our officials hear, they busy themselves with the machine as it grinds out routine reports, taking no effectual steps to alter this sad condition of things; or if enquiring, contriving, as if by malice aforethought, (though, of course, there is no malice either aforethought or afterthought), to miss the essential point of the enquiry. Had a new evangel rung in their ears from lips of angels in a beatific

vision, seen by a wondering and admiring world, telling to all that Heaven's light was indeed their guide, and wisely did they walk in that light, they could not be more self-satisfied than they are, or less solicitous to see thing Indian from any but the accustomed standpoint.

IX

INDIA WANTS CIVIL LIBERTIES

"WHEREFORE, I plead with my countrymen that they should endeavour to see things Indian for themselves and not through the medium of the India Office. Wherefore, I invite all who desire well to their India fellow-subjects to note carefully the 'sample of facts'—all or nearly all obtained from official sources—I lay before them, and to so prosecute their studies as, 'without haste, without rest,' to determine to pause not until the rights, liberties, and privileges of the Queen's English subjects are shared by the Queen-Empress's Indian subjects. The Indian people want but these things, only they want them as realities not as shams, to ultimately and not distantly raise India into a position second to none in the glittering array of British States scattered through the world.

"The English people have, now and again, been favoured with opportunities to render service to humanity. They never had so great an opportunity or one yielding such rich results as they possess in coming to a determination to restore India to the Indians while, at the same time retaining it by a silken cord of mutual esteem, affection, and profit with the British Empire."

CHAPTER III

The Congress before Gandhi

*Pushan, God of golden day,
Shorten thou the shepherd's way,
Vanquish every foe and stranger,
Free our path from every danger ;
Cloud-born Pushan, ever more,
Lead us as you led before.*

*Smite the wild wolf, fierce and vile,
Lurking in the dark defile,
Smite the robber and the thief,
Stealing forth to take our life :
Cloud-born Pushan, ever more,
Lead us as you led before.*

*Chase him Pushan in thy wrath,
Who infests the lonely path,
Robber with his ruthless heart,
Slayer with his secret dart ;
Child of cloud, for ever more,
Lead us as you led before.*

*Trample with thy heavy tread,
On the darksome man of dread,
On the low and lying knave,
Smooth-tongued double-dealing slave ;
Child of cloud, for ever more,
Lead us as you led before.*

ROMESH DUTT

[Translated from the Rigveda.]

The Congress before Gandhiji was an ineffective body led on by Pushan, the God of the Golden Day. There seemed to be some supernatural powers at the back of the Congress, otherwise the baby of the little Congress would not have survived the hammer-strokes of imperialism in the cradle of nationalist forces. It was God alone who vanquished every foe and stranger who came in the path of the Indian National Congress, until the Congress was able to face the imperial "wild wolf, fierce and vile".

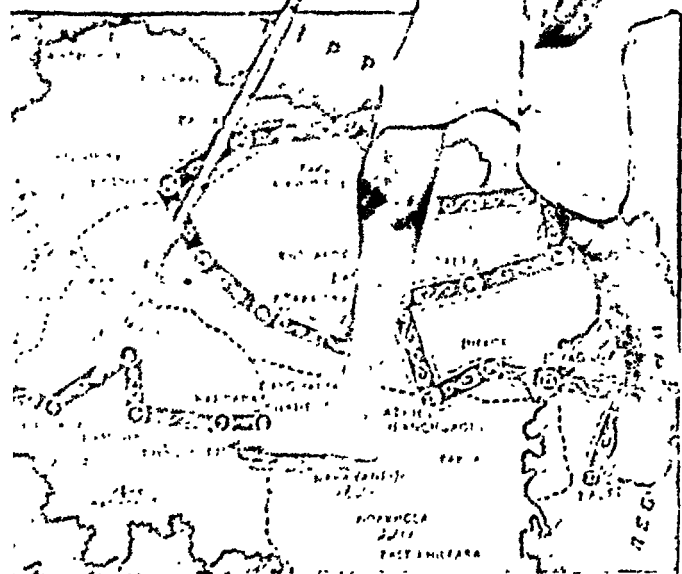
The Indian National Congress is a very mature organisation having come into being in the year 1885, through the efforts of a retired English officer, Mr. A. O. Hume who had for a long time held the high post of Secretary to the Government of India in the Home Department. Earlier men like Ram Mohan Roy had introduced the English education in India. The Roy was one of the makers of modern India. Further his ideas spread among the people.

I

THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

THOSE were the days, when after the mutiny of 1857, currying of official favour was in vogue, and democratic ideas were rampant the world over. The social Democrats of Germany had strengthened the Reich, there was talk of a Duma in Russia. In France, Liouis Napoleon had ended his reign, and Republic was instituted. So in India the democratic ideas of Congress received wide acclamation. For the Congress wanted to tamper down the currying of official fervour.

The Picture of Marshall A. ...
 ...
 ...





The Road of Destiny With a handful of Congress men, Gandhi is pursuing the road of India's destiny in the villages of Bengal. (1931)

The first session of the Congress was held in the year 1885, through the variegated efforts of Mr. Hume under the Presidentship of Mr. W. C. Bannerjee. In the early stages the Congress was a very tame body, and made extremely modest demands in a deferential tone, never forgetting its loyalty to the Crown. The next man to hold the scales even between the Government and the people was Dadabhai Naoroji, who became president of the Congress. He and his colleagues were considered to be the champions of liberty in their time and they were eminently fitted for the task, but there can be no denying the truth that their activities were confined mainly to the passing of respectful resolutions.

II

AIMS OF THE CONGRESS

IN those days, the aim of this great revolutionary organisation was nothing more than to create a social relationship among all the political workers of the country, to get some measure of reforms, to achieve some concession in the services and to have some commercial monopoly for business men. Even after this, for many years the reins of the Congress remained in the hands of Dadabhai Naoroji, and his other colleagues. They were considered to be champions of liberty in their days, but it is true that they did not do anything tangible.

On the Government side, efforts were made to co-opt the moves of the Congress, to offset them, and to meet with their wishes as often as desired.

III

THE BRITISH CHESSBOARD

THE Government moves could be judged only by a brief history of the East India Company. It got rights in India, with the help of the Royal Charter in the years of the seventeenth century. It had thus established in India as a trading concern. Gradually friction arose between the Company and the local rulers of the day. And this led in some places, as in Bengal, to armed conflict. During one of these conflicts Nawab Siraj-ud-Doula was defeated by the combined forces of the Company and the Indian deserters against him. This was practically the beginning of the political conquest of India. A few years later the Dewani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa was granted to the East India Company by the Emperor Shah Alam. The grant of the Dewani meant that these areas had passed under the control of the East India Company. There was maladministration, and in 1773, an Act was passed by the Company calling for better administration in India. It was called Lord North's Regulation Act. The three presidencies of Bengal, Bombay and Madras, which had been independent of one another, were brought under a Governor-General, who was to rule over them with the help of four Councillors. Thus began the period of British political and ¹⁹⁷⁷ administrative intervention in India. _{5D}

The Act of Lord North was followed by Pitt's Act about India passed in 1784. The Pitt Act provided for a Board of Control, composed partly of Cabinet

Ministers. The East India Company had to renew its control from time to time. The Charter Act of 1833 introduced a remarkable change in the status and function of the Company. Twenty years later the charter was renewed, and the control of the Government over the Company was strengthened. According to the provisions of this Act, the direction of the entire civil and military administration, and the sole power of legislation were vested in the Governor-General-in-Council. The Act required that one-third of the members of the Court of Directors of the Company should be nominated by the Crown. So far as India was concerned, further administrative changes were made. Bengal was made into a separate province under a Lieutenant-Governor and the Government of India Act was thereby separated from the Provincial Governments. The Act also provided for a Legislative Council for India, consisting of twelve members, all of whom were however to be officials. During the discussion John Bright spoke strongly against the Company's administration which he said had treated an incredible amount of disorder and corruption into the State and poverty, and wretchedness of the people. He demanded that the Crown should assume direct responsibility for the administration in India. There was War of Independence in 1857 and then in 1858, a new Government of India Act was passed. By this Act the Crown took over from the East India Company, the entire administration of the country. A Royal Proclamation was issued by Queen Victoria, and read out by Lord Canning at Allahabad on November 1st, 1858. In view of the responsibility of the British

Cabinet to India, the latter became the virtual arbiter of India's political destiny. The next important step was taken in 1861, when the Indian Councils Act was passed. The Act provided for the Governor-General's Legislative Council which was to have not more than twelve and not less than six members, half of whom were to be non-officials. Besides the Central Legislative Council, Provincial Councils consisting partly of non-official members appointed by the Government were also introduced. The Bengal got Provincial Legislative Council in 1862 and the North-West Provinces and Oudh (now called the United Provinces) in 1886. The failure of the revolution of 1857 was followed by a period of reaction, and during this period all anti-British movements in India were ruthlessly suppressed while the people at large were completely disarmed. By the eighties of the last century, the political depression was over, and the public began to raise their head once again. This was the formation of the Congress referred to previously. In 1892 an Act was passed called the Indian Councils Act. Under this Act the Legislative Councils were given the right to put questions, and to discuss the Budget, though voting on the Budget was not allowed. Further, provision was made in the Legislatures for a non-official element to be appointed by the Government. The Governor-General's Legislative Council was also increased by sixteen members. With the coming of the present century there was a national awakening in India on a large scale, and Bengal, which had suffered largest from the British yoke, was the pioneer in the movement.

IV

ROOTS OF THE CONGRESS

ITS roots, it is said, are to be discovered in the separate political associations in various parts of India; it was watered, we are told, by the controversies over the Vernacular Press Act, the Arms Act, the Indian Civil Service and the Ilbert Bill. 'Neither Indians nor Englishmen,' Mr. Rushbrook Williams assures us, 'can claim to be its sole creators.' But it was Hume who, by means of a public letter to the graduates of Calcutta University, persuaded the educated classes of Bengal to take a part in his organization and mark for the regeneration and political advancement of India.

'No Indian,' declared Gokhale, 'could have started the Indian National Congress'. The reason is not far to seek. Apart from the fact that anyone undertaking so great an enterprise would need a personality and an influence possessed by few Indians at the time, since their ambitions were mainly local, there is not the slightest doubt that if an Indian had the temerity to launch it, it would have been nipped in the bud by the officials. Such was the official distrust of political agitation in those days that had not the founder of the Congress been an Englishman and a distinguished ex-official, the authorities would have at once found some way or other of suppressing the movement.

'If only fifty men, good and true can be found to join us as founders, the thing can be established,' declared Hume, 'and further development will be comparatively easy'.

These were the main ideas embodied in his open letter addressed to the graduates of Calcutta University on 1st March 1883. He closed it with an appeal which deserves to be remembered: 'As I said before, you are the salt of the land. And if amongst even you, the elite, fifty men cannot be found with sufficient power of self-sacrifice, sufficient love and pride in their country, sufficient genuine and unselfish heartfelt patriotism to take the initiative, and if needs be, devote the rest of their lives to the cause—then there is no hope for India. Her sons must and will remain more humble and helpless instruments in the hands of foreign rulers, for "they would be free themselves must strike the blow,".....' Every nation secures precisely as good a government as it merits.'

For the first time the aims and objects of the Congress were publicly defined by the President, W. C. Bannerjee. They were:—

- (a) The promotion of personal intimacy and friendship amongst all the more earnest workers in our country's cause in various parts of the Empire.
- (b) The eradication by direct friendly personal intercourse of all possible race, creed or provincial prejudices amongst all lovers of our country, and the fuller development and consolidation of those sentiments of national unity that had their origin in their Beloved Lord Ripon's ever memorable reign.

- (c) The authoritative record, after this has been, carefully elicited by the fullest discussion, of the matured opinions of the educated classes in India on some of the more important and pressing of the social questions of the day.
- (d) The determination of the lines upon and methods by which during the next twelve months it is desirable for native politicians to labour in the public interest.

But it was Macaulary, with his strong prejudices who as the President of the Committee in 1834 decided once and for all that the development of English education was the paramount duty of the Government. He aimed at establishing the English language and literature in the predominant position which the Greek and *Latin classics enjoyed in England*, and he expected that in this way a class of men would arise, Indian in blood and colour, but English in ideas and culture. But the literature on which they were brought up was the literature of liberty, of revolt—the writings of Tom Paine, Mill and Mazzini. It was natural therefore that the ideas which western culture introduced to Indians should create in them a love for liberty, for national unity and an understandable ambition to improve the condition of the masses. But the tenure of the British in India was thought to depend upon the withholding of the keys of power from Indians; and this contradiction between educational policy and political policy was bound to lead to discontent and later to open conflict.

While the universities went on producing graduates year after year to fill Government offices in clerical and subordinate positions, the condition of the masses was progressively becoming worse. The competition of foreign manufactures had already killed or was gradually killing Indian handicrafts. Agriculture was becoming less and less able to provide the rural population with a tolerable subsistence. The resolution of the third Congress on the connexion between education and the poverty of the people is worth noting. 'That having regard to the poverty of the people, it is desirable that the Government be moved to elaborate a system of technical education, suitable to the condition of the country, to encourage indigenous manufactures by a more strict observance of the orders already existing in regard to utilizing such manufactures for State purposes, and to employ more extensively than at present, the skill and talents of the people of the country.'

Gokhale explained the mental conflict to which this class had gradually become subjected: 'A kind of, dwarfing or stunting of the Indian race is going on under the present system. We must live all the days of our life in an atmosphere of inferiority and the tallest of us must bend in order that the exigencies of the existing system may be satisfied..... The moral elevation which every self-governing people feels cannot be felt by us. Our administrative and military talents must gradually disappear owing to sheer disuse, till at last our lot, as hewers of wood and drawers of water in our own country, is stereotyped.'

V

THE UNITED INDIAN PATRIOTIC
ASSOCIATION

WITHIN three years of its existence the Congress attracted to itself the suspicion and hostility of an organization now lost to fame called the United Indian Patriotic Association. This body took upon itself the duty of conducting propaganda against the Congress, and in this activity it was joined by *The Pioneer* of Allahabad which published articles and reports of speeches by persons denouncing the Congress and all its works. A collection of these reports and articles published in 1888 to show 'the seditious character of the Indian National Congress and the opinions held by eminent natives of India who are opposed to the movements gives an insight into the psychology of the reactionaries of the time, both English and Indian.

They set out to prove that the debating society miscalled the Indian National Congress did not represent the opinions of 200,000,000 people as it was said to do, because 'not only have large public meetings all over India condemned the movement, but more than forty political associations have expressed their bitter hostility to it'. Introducing his contributors, the editor Theodore Beck mentions people like the Raja of Bhinga, the Maharaja of Benares, Sir Sayed Ahmed, Syed Hosain Bilgrami, and His Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad, the patron of the Association. He informs his readers that 'the members of the United Indian Patriotic Association, while strongly opposed to the

introduction represent active institutions as utterly unfitted for the present state of the country, yield to none in their desire for the true advancement of the people. But they do not believe that the way to secure this end is by an effort to wrest the power from the hands of the Indian Government or by attempting to coerce it, either by uninformed British electors or by the ignorant masses of India.'

VI

THE FIRST NON-INDIAN CONGRESS PRESIDENT

GEORGE Yule was President at Allahabad, the first non-Indian to hold that office. He was a Calcutta merchant with a genuine sympathy for Indian aspirations. In his presidential address he argued for the right of representation, comparing the revenue and expenditure of India with that of England and deploring the fact that while not a penny of the income of the British Government was raised without the consent of the people, there was not a man outside the Supreme Council in India who had a voice in the matter of the Indian budget. He drew another telling moral from the fact that there were many thousands of Hindu, Muslim, Parsi and other gentlemen in the country who, if they were to transfer their persons to England for twelve months or more and pay certain rates, would be qualified to enjoy all the rights and privileges of British subjects. 'If you and I go to England,' he said, 'we are qualified. If we return to India, our character changes, and we are not qualified. In

England we should be trusted citizens. In India, well; the charitably minded among our opponents say that we are incipient traitors.'

The most striking speech was made by Lala Murlidhar speaking in Urdu: 'You, you, it seems, are content to join with these accursed monsters in batten- ing on the heart's blood of your brethren (cries of No, No). I say Yes; look round! What are all these chandeliers and lamps, and hats, and English coats and bonnets and frocks, and silver-mounted canes, and all the luxurious fittings of your houses, but trophies of India's misery, mementoes of India's starvation. Every rupee you have spent on Europe-made articles, a rupee of which you have robbed your poorer brethren, honest handicraftsmen, who can now no longer earn a living. Of course I now that it was pure philanthropy which, to facilitate this repealed the import duties and flung away three crores a year of revenue which the rich paid, and to balance this wicked sacrifice raised the salt tax, which the poor pay; which is now pressing factory regulations on us, to kill if possible, the one tiny new industrial departure India could boast. Oh, yes, it is all philanthropy, but the result is that from this cause, amongst others, your brethren are starving.'

Indian public opinion welcomed such criticisms as the *Manchester Guardian* made on the condition of the Indian people: 'We are forced to ask ourselves whether these economic evils may not be traced directly or indirectly to that famous system of Government which has been slowly built up by the labours of many great Englishmen, and whether, while

anxious to do our best for India, to give her a thoroughly just and good administration, we are not unconsciously undermining the foundation of Indian society, which rests upon the peasant cultivator in his village community. The whole system of land tenure and taxation is called in question by the repeated famines, each worse than the one before it, which we have witnessed of late years.

VII

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

RACIAL discrimination angered the nationalists as probably nothing else did. The reservation of various public institutions and amenities or even railway compartments 'for Europeans only' caused much bitterness. The reduction of the pay of Indians in the higher services and the exclusion of Indian members of the educational service from certain posts had the appearance of racial discrimination. The Engineering College of Roorkee was closed to Asiatics of pure descent. People pointed out the quaintness of the decision since Asiatics of impure descent were not excluded and a privilege was thus given to illegitimacy. The disabilities of Indians in South Africa roused intense feelings.

'In India', said a Congressman, 'we are not permitted to become members of the Imperial Legislative Council. In England, even the doors of that August assembly, the House of Commons, are open to us. But in South Africa we are not permitted to travel without a pass, we are not allowed to walk

about in the night, we are consigned to locations, we are denied admission to the first and second classes on railways, we are driven out of tramcars, we are pushed off footpaths, we are kept out of hotels, we are refused the benefit of the public paths, we are spat upon, we are hissed, we are cursed, we are abused, and we are subjected to a variety of other indignities which no human being can patiently endure'. This was a painful tale. The stories from South Africa which were reported to India in great abundance after Mr. Gandhi emigrated to that unhappy part of the world, were bound to make Indians' blood boil.

Naturally the status of inferiority which Indians enjoyed abroad was ascribed not merely to colour or race prejudice but to the political servitude which prevailed in India, the home of the 'coolie' race. Presiding at the Congress meeting of 1897 Sir (then Mr.) Sankaran Nair discussed this problem. He said that the British Colonies justified their bad treatment of Indians by reference to 'our degraded position in our own country—On this race question no concession is possible. No compromise can be accepted in so far as it lies in us. We must insist on perfect equality. Inequality means race inferiority, national abasement. Acquisition, therefore, of all civil rights conferred on Englishmen, removal of all disabilities of Indians as such these must be our aim'.

A question which arose in connexion with the 1890 Congress elicited the following reply from the Governor-General's private secretary: 'The Govern-

ment of India recognize that the Congress movement is regarded as representing what would in Europe be called the advanced Liberal Party, as distinguished from the great body of Conservative opinion which exists side by side with it. They desire themselves to maintain an attitude of neutrality in their relations with both parties so long as these act strictly within their constitutional function'.

Pandit Madan Malaviya explained this in words which demand quotation: 'what is an Englishman without representative institutions? Why, not an Englishman at all, a mere sham, a base imitation, and I often wonder as I look round at our nominally English magnates, how they have the face to call themselves Englishmen and yet deny us representative institutions, and struggle to maintain despotic part of the true Briton as his language and his literature..... India has found a voice at last in this great Congress, and in it, and through it, we call on England to be true to her traditions, her instincts and herself, and grant us our rights as freeborn British citizens'.

Lord Curzon started well: one of his earliest speeches dwelt on his affection for India. 'I love India,' he said, 'its people, its history, its Government, the complexities of its civilization and life'.

VIII

GOKHALE PRICKS LORD CURZON

Gokhale summed up Lord Curzon and the achievements of his administration in the course of

his presidential address to the twenty-first Congress in 1905. 'For seven long years,' he said, 'all eyes had constantly to turn to one masterful figure in the land—now in admiration, now in astonishment, more often in anger and in pain till at last it has become difficult to realize that a change has really come. For a parallel to such an administration, we must, I think, go back to the times of Aurangzeb in the history of our own country. There we find the same overpowering consciousness of duty, the same marvellous capacity for work, the same sense of loneliness, the same persistence in a policy of distrust and repression, resulting in bitter exasperation all round. I think even the most devoted admirer of Lord Curzon cannot claim that he has strengthened the foundations of British rule in India..... To him India was a country where the Englishman was to monopolize for all time all power, and talk all the while of duty. The Indian's only business was to be governed and it was a sacrilege on his part to have any other aspiration. In his scheme of things there was no room for the educated classes of the country; and having failed to amuse them for any length of time by an empty show of taking them into his confidence he proceeded in the end to repress them. Even in his last farewell speech at the Byculla Club in Bombay, India exists only as a scene of the Englishman's labours, with the toiling millions of the country—eighty per cent of the population—in the background. The remaining twenty per cent, for aught they are worth, might as be gently swept into the sea!'

It was, however, the Universities' Act and the preparation for it in defiance of public opinion that created bad feeling. In 1901 Lord Curzon held an educational conference at Simla to which only European educationists were invited. It was a secret conclave and about this very conference the Viceroy declared: 'Concealment has been no part of my policy since I have been in India, and the education of the people is assuredly the last subject to which I should think of applying such a canon.' Commenting on this, Surendranath Bannerjee writes: 'The effrontery of it lay in the emphatic denunciation of secrecy at the very time, and in connexion with the very subject, in regard to which the speaker had made up his mind to violate the canon that he had so eloquently proclaimed.' It was an amusing divergence between profession and practice in one who had so greatly extolled the ethics of the West above the baser morality of the East.

It is necessary to bear in mind that the movement, in its origin at any rate, was not anti-British. There was some anxiety about its effect on the many Englishmen in Calcutta who strongly disapproved of the partition. Besides it was intended to appeal to the British public against the Government of India. After confidential consultations with English friends the Calcutta leaders put the following resolution to a mass meeting at the Town Hall and carried it with acclamation.

'That this meeting fully sympathizes with the resolution adopted at many meetings held in the mofussil to abstain from the purchase of British Manufactures

so long as the partition resolution is not withdrawn, as a protest against the indifference of the British public in regard to Indian affairs and the consequent disregard of Indian public opinion by the present Government.'

The Official Report of the Congress thus summarizes the achievement of the 'second ill-started administration of Lord Curzon.' The Official Secrets Act was passed in the teeth of universal opposition. It was condemned by the whole press India and Anglo-Indian—protests from all quarters poured in, but Lord Curzon was implacable, and the Gagging Act was passed. Education was crippled and mutilated; it was made expensive and it was officialized; and so that most effective instrument for the enslavement of our national interest, the Indian Universities Act, was passed, and the policy of checking, if not altogether undoing the noble work of Bentinck, Macaulay and Lord Halifax, which for more than half a century has been continued with such happy results to the country, came in full swing.

IX

WE ARE NO LONGER BEGGARS

LALA LAJPAT RAI urged all to show that 'we are no longer beggars, and that we are subjects of an Empire where people are struggling to achieve that position which is their right'.

On the subject of agitation the Grand Old Man drawing upon his experience of British Politics, discussed his political strategy :

'Agitation is the life and soul of the whole political, social and industrial history of England. It is by agitation the English have accomplished their most glorious achievements, their prosperity, their liberties and, in short, their first place among the nations of the world. The whole life of England everyday is all agitation. You do not open your paper in the morning but read from beginning to end it is all agitation—congresses and conferences, meetings and resolutions without end—for a thousand and one movements, local and national. From the Prime Minister to the humblest politician, his occupation is agitation for everything he wants to accomplish. The whole Parliament, press and platform is simply all agitation. Agitation is the civilized peaceful weapon of moral force, and infinitely preferable to brute physical force, when possible. Agitate; agitate means inform. Inform the Indian people what their rights are and how and why they should obtain them and inform the British people of the rights of the Indian and why they should grant them. If we do not speak, they say we are satisfied. If we speak properly asked to act constitutionally, while the Government remains unconstitutional and despotic.'

The growth of the Swadeshi Movement during the partition controversy was the result not only of political but of economic consciousness, a consciousness of inferiority. 'India's fiscal policy is determined,' wrote an Indian economist, 'by the interest of foreign producers abroad; her currency is trifled with and experimented upon without reference to her interest; her borrowings are not for industrial development; the resources of the government are not pledged

for attracting capital on reasonable terms; and profits which, if they remained within the country, would fertilize and multiply the means of prosperity, are drawn away to be enjoyed by absentee shareholders abroad, leaving the people denuded of the means of expansion and development.'

While on the whole the entry of the Swarajist Party into the Councils for obstructionist purposes was without result, for the government had powers to meet obstruction with certification, in the country the Congress was without a practical politics. There gradually came a lull in Indian politics. The Congress met annually as before; but it had become a huge and unwieldy organization for the purpose of deliberation. Its plenary sessions were now increasingly disturbed by petty controversies. Mr. Aldous Huxley, the novelist, who was a visitor to the Cawnpore Congress, described a day's proceedings as follows: 'Some of the speeches were in Hindi. When a man began in English there would be a shout of 'Hindi! Hindi!' from the patriots of Upper India. Those on the other hand, who began in Hindi would find themselves interrupted by protest by the Tamil speaking delegates from the South who called for English. Pandit Motilal Nehru, the leader of the Swaraj Party, delivered his principal oration in Hindi. When it was over an excited man jumped up and complained to the President and the Congress at large that he had spent upwards of a hundred rupees coming from somewhere beyond Madras to listen to his leader—a hundred rupees, and the leader had spoken in Hindi; he had not understood a single word. Later in the day one of his compatriots

mounted the rostrum and retaliated on the North by making a very long and totally incomprehensible speech in Tamil. The North was furious naturally. These are some of the minor complexities of Indian politics.'

CHAPTER IV

From Terrorism to Gandhism

*A thing which fades
With no cultured eye—
Is the flower
Of the heart of man
In this world!*

(Ch. No. 100, *Ch. 100, Japanese Poet*)

MAHATMA GANDHI was able to face the sharp sword of terrorism in India with his shield of non-violence, because his philosophy of life was based on the flower of human heart. The mighty hand of a terrorist is helpless before the spiritual power of an understanding heart, and it was by that means alone that Gandhiji was able to transmute the weak current of nationalism into a mighty civilizing force. Gandhiji desires that the flower of the heart of man must not fade in this rash, raving world, and that it is only possible if all men take to the creed of non-violence and the wars are declared illegal and all atomic weapons of war are strictly banned.

The Partition of Bengal was easily the first landmark of this century. So long the Congress had remained a united body, but now it was no longer so, one group of the Congressmen was in favour of an all-out struggle against Britain, but that was not true

of the others. The section headed by Tilak separated from Dadabhai Naoroji group. This is known as the Surat split. So far as the Congress had never come into direct conflict with the Government. But now they crossed swords. Threats of imprisonment and bullets were bravely faced. The agitation was a storm in itself. It laid bare the bureaucracy and caused the opening of a new era. This event compels a reflection into the character of the great Maharashtra leader. Lokmanya Tilak first came into limelight in 1884, when with several other Mahratta Leaders, he founded the Deccan Education Society. Soon after Mr. Gokhale joined the party. Later on there arose differences between Lokmanya Tilak and Gokhale. In 1905 Mr. Gokhale founded the Servants of India Society: the object of which was to train national missionaries for the service of India. Tilak resorted to different methods in order to vindicate his policy. Those were the revival of the Ganapati festival which was a religious festival given a national interpretation by him — and the Shivaji festival held every year on the birth anniversary of Shivaji, the great hero of Maharashtra. As a result of these activities, and in consequence of some other speeches in Bengal, he was sentenced to six years' rigorous imprisonment.

II

TERRORISM IN BENGAL

DID this nationalism in Bengal follow a straight forward course?

No, Bengal politics took a different turn. If the Congress had very great task ahead in winning over the population of India in its own ideals, greater was the task of converting people of Bengal. Bengal did not take any course which would have brought political maturity visibly near in that province. It suffered from chronic indigestion of western ideas. It never had time to end conflicts in the province, and follow one doctrine. It followed many creeds. The notable of these was a faith in Liberalism and in campaign of violence. The leaders of Bengal were inclined to be either whole-hog or they wanted (in some cases) to pursue the doctrines of Terrorism.

Consequently the early Bengal leaders were either great liberals or great terrorists. Some times Bepin Chander Pal or Aurobindo Ghose sought to find out a middle way between these two extremes. But Bengal was destined to remain in wilderness. Subhas Bose spent his boyhood in such an atmosphere. He might have been easily carried away by these doctrines which were then the articles of faith. But Subhas Bose was made of a sterner stuff. His well-to-do parent gave him the education in keeping with their middle-class ideals of bringing up children in a puritan surroundings.

Subhas Babu imbibed these religious ideas, as well as he learned his English and Arithmetic at school. He wanted however to find out the truth about religion which his parents imparted to him.

With this zeal he undertook wanderings from end to end of the province. He ran away from his

house as a young boy, met numerous sanyasis and passed time in their company. But these spiritual dupes did not satisfy him.- However, he saw light in these roamings and realised that he must saturate his mind with learning and then find out the truth about religion.

Terrorist gangs were just then active in Bengal, and they showed unmistakable shrewdness in recruiting middle class youngmen. The latter happened to be extremely restless in their surroundings. They showed an impatience to break away from them. Subhas Bose in the frame of mind in which he found himself might easily have been lured away by these terrorist gangs. But he was not.

In his college days there were other incidents, which might have brought about the conversion of Subhas Bose to the doctrines of terrorism, if he were so inclined. Students were then taking increasing part in strikes. Some of them were of particularly violent nature. Subhas Bose, though he often took part in these strikes, refrained from all rowdy acts.

III

THE FIRST WORLD-WAR

AFTER that things were quiet, till the Great War broke out, when the revolutionary party, which had been born during the first decade of this century became very active. So to placate Indian opinion an announcement was made on August 20th, 1917, by

Government. After the Lucknow Congress, an intensive campaign was started by Lokmanya Tilak, Mrs. Annie Besant, and Mr. M. A. Jinnah for demanding home-rule for India. The Congress leaders agreed to Home-rule scheme, and the League Leaders were also asked to agree to it, while separate electorate was granted to the Muslims. Mrs. Besant was interned by the Government in this connection, but was released some months later, owing to the pressure of public agitation. At last she agreed to become the president of the Congress. That was however the last Congress attended by the Moderates, for the next year they broke away from the Congress and formed All-India Liberal Federation. In 1917 Mr. Montague came to India, and together with the Viceroy Lord Chelmsford, made a report on the coming reforms called the Montague-Chelmsford Report. This report was considered by a special session of the Congress held at Bombay, presided over by the late Mr. Hassan Imam, a distinguished advocate of Patna and ex-Judge of the Patna High Court, and was rejected by the Congress as unacceptable.

V

CHAURI CHAURA

WHEN the Mahatma, under pressure of the bloody excesses at Amritsar, Bombay, and Chauri Chaura, ordered the cessation of the movement which had already begun, he was trying to come nearer to the knowledge of truth: "I am but a seeker after truth. I claim to be making a ceaseless effort to find

it. But I admit I have not yet found it. To find truth completely is to realize oneself and one's destiny, in other words, to become perfect. I am painfully conscious of my imperfections and therein lies all the strength I possess . . ."

But confession of error does not imply in Gandhi any attempt to escape from responsibility for what has happened. On the contrary, he feels himself personally liable for all the consequences of his policy. When twenty-one police officers were cruelly massacred by the infuriated mob in Chauri Chaura Gandhi treated this event as a warning from God: he had been shown that India was not yet sufficiently permeated by the spirit of non-violence, but at the same time he took complete responsibility for this crime of the mob which he loathed, because it had been committed in his name, and he was, therefore, stained with blood.

Although he had sent the English Government an ultimatum a few days previously, and although this retirement exposed him to the derision of his enemies, he nevertheless submitted to this "most bitter humiliation" and immediately cut short the civil disobedience movement already started. "Let the opponent," he wrote on this occasion, "glory in our humiliation and so-called defeat. It is better to be charged with cowardice than to be guilty of denial of our oath and sin against God. It is a million times better that I should be the laughing stock of the world than that I should act insincerely towards myself.... I know that the drastic reversal of practically the whole of the

aggressive programme may be politically unsound and unwise, but there is no doubt that it is religiously sound. The country will have gained by my humiliation and confession of error.....I lay no claim to superhuman powers. I wear the same corruptible flesh as the weakest of my fellow beings wear, and am, therefore, as liable to err as any..."

VI

THE HIMALAYAN MISCALCULATION

MR. GANDHI was profoundly shocked. He imposed on himself a penitential fast and suspended his programme, publicly confessing that his call for civil disobedience had been due to a 'Himalayan' miscalculation of the moral standards of the masses to whom he had made his appeal. He announced a new programme of moral propaganda for educating the public and making them fit for the practice of non-violence. A series of moral and educational leaflets was issued in Bombay, but excited little interest, and he soon began to publish two newspapers at Ahmadabad in English and in Gujarati, 'Young India' and 'Gavajivan' as vehicles of political propaganda combined with moral instruction as to non-violence in all its varied aspects.

In December 1919 he welcomed with enthusiasm the Royal Proclamation which announced the Royal Assent to the Government's Reforms Act of 1919:

'The Proclamation gives one an insight into the true British character. For as the Proclamation shows it at its best; General Dyer's inhumanity shows it at its worst..... The Reforms Act coupled with the Proclamation is earnest of the intention of the British people to do justice to India, and it ought to remove suspicion on that score..... Our duty, therefore, is not to subject the Reforms to carping criticism but to settle down quietly to work so as to make them a success.'

"He expressed the same views publicly at the Amritsar Congress of December 1919. Unfortunately, however, they underwent a rapid change."

—F. G. PRATT, C.S.I.

VII

GANDHI AND THE MUSLIMS

WHEN there prevails an atmosphere of mutual distrust and feelings are running high, it is not possible for people swayed by prejudice to arrive at the real truth. In such an atmosphere even persons who are our well-wishers and benefactors are misunderstood and taken as otherwise. It is a matter of extreme regret that the leaders of the Pakistan movement wise in their own sphere and the communal newspapers (that fail to see eye to eye with Mahatma Gandhi), should doubt even the sincerity of purpose of the greatest living son of India. whom

all dispassionate and thoughtful minds of the 20th century have considered as one possessing the purest heart and the soundest mind amongst the 400 millions of India. Before we begin to question his honesty, we would do well to bear in mind the following indisputable facts:

1. In 1920 during the Khilafat agitation, the first non-Muslim leader to identify himself wholeheartedly with the movement was Mahatma Gandhi. He gave the movement a tremendous momentum and thus rendered invaluable help to the Muslims at a time of dire need. The fact of the matter is that those Muslim leaders who to-day are running down Gandhiji, owe their worldly elevation as well as political consciousness chiefly to him.

2. Mahatma Gandhi claimed many a time the Ali Brothers as his real brothers. During the non-cooperation days, it was their advice which carried the greatest weight with him.

3. It was only a personality of Gandhiji's farsighted wisdom and transparent sincerity, who could declare in 1924, that the question of Hindu-Muslim unity, be referred for final solution to the late Hakim Ajmal Khan alone and that his decision should be binding on both Hindus and Muslims. It has neither been widely known nor properly appreciated that as a result of this announcement, Gandhiji came in for very severe criticism at the hands of the Nationalist Press. But despite all that Gandhiji boldly stuck to his word. There is no other Indian leader who could have made such an astounding suggestion.

VIII

THE DARKEST DAYS

4. GANDHI also cherished great regard for and had implicit faith in the late Dr. Ansari, whom he preferred to the topmost Hindu members of the Working Committee.

5. At the time of the Round Table Conference, Gandhiji unequivocally declared that he was ever prepared to concede all the demands of the Muslims, only if the nationalist Muslims would endorse them. It is, however, to the eternal credit of the nationalist Muslims that they did not agree to the unpatriotic and irrational demands of the communalists and thus refused to submit to the indirect dictation of Sir Samuel Hoare, to whose tune the separatists were then dancing.

6. Who does not know that even to-day in all matters of real political importance which Gandhiji has to decide, it is the advice of M. Azad which he values most?

7. Institutions like the All-India Spinner's Association and the All-India Village Industries Association which have sprung up at Gandhiji's bidding and whose work is being carried on under his direct supervision have always aimed at ameliorating the hard lot of the poor people without any distinction of colour, caste or creed. The Muslims who are comparatively poor can naturally benefit more from such nation-building activities.

8. During the dark days of 1932-33 when all the representative political institutions of the Muslims had completely disowned the Pathans of the N. W. F. P., it was Gandhiji who came to their rescue, and made the cause of the frontier people his own.

9. It was Gandhiji again, who urged the Ministries in the seven Congress provinces to treat the Muslim minority not only justly but generously.

Whatever the leaders of the Pakistan Movement might say to the contrary, there is no doubt that the Congress Ministries fully safeguarded the rights and protected the interests of the Muslims and in a way even pampered them.

Keeping the foregoing in view, it is but meet to say that Gandhiji alone at this time is the true apostle of Hindu-Muslim unity, and that he is instinctively incapable of thinking in terms of communalism.

IX

NON-VIOLENCE IN WAR

MAHATMA GANDHI says:—

“In all the wars that Britain has fought or in which she has been engaged there have been reverses some of which may be considered disastrous. But the British have a knack of surviving them and turning them into stepping-stones to success. Hence the say-

ing, peculiar to them, that they blunder through to success. "Failures do not dismay or demoralise them. Wars are for them a national game like football. The defeated team heartily congratulates the successful one almost as if it was a joint victory, and drowns the sorrow of defeat in an exchange of glasses of whisky.

And is there the slightest cause for alarm? Certainly not for those who believe in non-violence. For fear and distrust of self are no part of their composition. Nor are they part of a panoplied soldier. The attribute of non-violence is, perhaps, only a copy book maxim. We do not see it in actual practice in any measure but this war is abundant proof that neither party, though steeped in violence, betrays any fear or distrust. I am filled with amazement and admiration at the reckless bravery displayed by combatants on either side. This war is a demonstration of unthinkable nerve that human beings are capable of possessing. Looked at from either standpoint, therefore, we should be ashamed of fear, distrust and nervelessness in the face of danger. It is, therefore, the sacred duty of every worker to steel himself against cowardly panic and prevent its spread as far as he can. "Cowards die many times before their death." Let this not be proved of us.

CHAPTER V

How Gandhi Spends His Day

*The groves are beautifully bright
For many and many a mile
With jasmine-flowers that are as white
As loving woman's smiles :
The resolution of a saint
Might well be tried by this ;
Far more, young hearts that fancies paint
With dreams of loving bliss.*

KALIDASA

[Translated by Arthur W. Ryder from Sanskrit.]

GANDHIJI loves to spend most of his time in surroundings of nature. The city life hangs heavy upon his head. He gets all the romance of spiritual life from the close vicinity of nature. He enjoys his prayers and meditations away from the madding crowd. Cinema and hotel life are nothing to him as compared with the fascination of an open-air prayer. Even in his old age he enjoys his spiritual pleasures like a young heart. In fact, Gandhiji is a poet of life. His life is a better poetry than the verses of Kalidasa or Shakespeare.

At the age of 76 Mahatma Gandhi, in spite of the heavy work he does, keeps up his health well. The secret lies in his being methodical and systematic in his daily work. He is a peculiar combination of a slave to his watch and a master of his time. He works whenever he pleases and is thus a free man, freer than kings and viceroys. But work has got to be done and he does it according to a system which leaves nothing undone at the end of the day. He carries a watch all the time, but one suspects that it is intended as much to help him as to keep off people who want to take a minute more of his time than they should. After the one hour Mahatma Gandhi gave originally, to Louis Fischer, he showed the American journalist his watch. His time was up. In his book Fischer tells us, with pardonable regard to his own position as a journalist, that Sevagram was the only place where he was shown the watch.

Secondly, Mahatma Gandhi is an indomitable optimist. He lives for a great cause which he is determined to lead to a successful conclusion. His self-confidence is so superb that he openly and repeatedly proclaims, as if to spite somebody in heaven, that he must not be expected there for another half a century.

Thirdly, Mahatma Gandhi's sense of humour is excellent. And humour has been described as 'the greatest of the saving graces after the Lord's prayer'. One day an impertinent inquiry was addressed to him by an angry correspondent whether he had a sense of humour at all. The correspondent had felt that the Mahatma was so red-hot in his creeds and convictions that he appeared humourless. The Mahatma replied,

that if he had not had a sense of humour in him, he would not have been able to get on with men like the angry correspondent,

Fourthly, he is a man of God, and believes that more things are wrought by prayer than the world dreams of. To those who believe, prayer is the very staff of life.

Fifthly, Mahatma Gandhi himself and the people round about him take meticulous care of his health. If the patient is his own best doctor, Mahatma Gandhi is one. It is not only that competent medical advice is at his beck and call, but that he watches it himself carefully and corrects the balance at once by the exercise of restraint on food and work.

Here is a chart of his daily round :—

5 a.m., Wash, etc.

5-15 a.m., Morning prayer for half an hour with inmates of the Ashram.

5-45—6-30 a.m., Nap or work.

6-30 a.m., Breakfast.

7-30—8-30 a.m., Walk.

8-30—11 a.m., Massage and bath.

11-30 a.m., Lunch. Newspapers are read out to him.

1-0—4-30 p.m., Work, Nap, if necessary.

4-30 p.m., Spinning.

6 p.m., Food. Newspapers are read out to him.

7 p.m., Prayer.

7-15—8-30 p.m., Walk.

9-10 p.m., Work.

10 p.m., Sleep.

Mahatma Gandhi's 'wardrobe' consists of six pieces of cloth, three loincloths, and three chaddars (upper cloths), the chaddar serving as shirt and blanket in one. An extra pair is kept for use in an emergency.

He bathes in warm water always. No soap is used. He has first a massage with oil and lime-juice mixed. Another massage in the bath with a piece of rough cloth and the whole body becomes perfectly clean.

He shaves himself with a safety-razor without, however, a mirror before him, with the result that at times some small islands of unmown hair are left over for the next operation. An 'occasional hair-cut is performed by one of the Ashramites.

"gold and silver have I none."

Gold and silver have I none, runs a line in the scripture. As an exponent of 'parigraha' (non-possession) this suits him admirably. The frame of the spectacles he wears is apparently made of a very uncostly metal. He indeed appears to belong to an old dispensation.

• **A WEEK WITH GANDHI**

Thus writes Louis Fischer:—

This summer I spent a week with Gandhi. I walked with him every morning from a quarter to six to a quarter after six, I took a solid hour's interview with him every afternoon and had lunch and dinner with him each day. I'd gone down expecting to encounter an austere, forbidding cold saint. Actually

he's very warm and human, with a delicate sense of humour and plays with the kiddies, but he has one extremely embarrassing characteristic—he says everything he thinks. We each of us carry a blue pencil in our minds, we exercise an internal censorship. But among the very few things that Gandhi carries on his person you will find no blue pencil. I was walking with him across the fields one day and asked him how he had come to introduce his weekly day of silence—on Monday, as you know he doesn't speak—which might be recommended to others. He explained that it happened years ago. He said: "I used to travel morning, noon and night in hot trains, and on open bullock carts throughout hot India, and thousands of people would come to me to ask questions, make pleas and beg that I pray with them and I used to get tired; so I introduced the weekly day of silence. Since then I have clothed this weekly day of silence in all kinds of moral virtues and given it a philosophical content, but actually it was only because I wanted to take a day off." Now he didn't have to put it that way, but Gandhi has a devotion to the truth and an uninhibited tongue which makes him tell the whole story: it gets him into all kinds of difficulties. He said to me, for instance, and he has said subsequently in writing: "I would go to Japan and sign a treaty of peace with the Japanese." Now he immediately added in the conversation to me, "I know the British will never let me go to Japan and I know that if ever I got to Japan the Japanese wouldn't sign a treaty of peace with me". Then why talk about it? Because the idea had occurred to him and for Gandhi the fact that an idea isn't practicable doesn't mean that he mustn't talk

about it. However, this statement has enabled persons, who for very ulterior motives wish to smear Gandhi, to say that Gandhi is pro-Japanese. Now there are many Americans and many English whose word as to who is pro-Japanese I would not accept, because many of those Americans and Englishmen were themselves pro-Japanese and appeased the Japanese and sent Japan the scrap and oil which our boys are now getting back in uglier form. There is one man whose word I would take as to who is pro or anti-Japanese, and that is Chiang Kai-shek, and he has intervened (as I told you) with President Roosevelt and with Winston Churchill in recent months repeatedly, with a view to the moderation of British policy in India. Chiang Kai-shek knows that Gandhi is anti-Japanese, pro-Chinese and anti-Axis. And Gandhi has proved it. But it's simply Gandhi's manner of speech that exposes him to these false charges.

The symbol of India's unanimous wish for freedom is Mahatma Gandhi. He does not represent all of India, but he does reflect the will of all India for national liberation. A great man is like good sculpture, made of one piece. A great man lives a single-tracked life. Lincoln was great he lived for Union. Lenin was great he lived in order to raise Russia out of the feudal mire. Churchill is great because all of his acts have been directed towards the preservation of England as a first-class power. And in the same way Gandhi is great because every single act that he performs is calculated to promote the one goal of his life—the liberation of India. He is not the man, he has no intention and never had, to rule India or

administering India. His function ends when he frees India. When Churchill speaks, his eloquence is so compelling because he is merely saying brilliantly what every plain English citizen says to his wife or his neighbour every evening. A great man is you in a bigger and better edition. You applaud the speaker who echoes your view. Similarly, Gandhi when he talks, when he acts, is without the authority of a vote or an organisation reflecting the unanimous wish of India to be free. As I sat with him on the ground in his little mud hut in the centre of sizzling hot India, I had the impression as I listened to his voice that I was listening to four hundred million voices and the impact upon me was overwhelming.

India is sick with frustration. In India I heard "frustration" from the poor the idealistic student and from the multi-millionaire, from the steel manufacturer, from the high Indian official and from the hardworking merchant. They were referring to frustrations resulting from the British rule. But I found frustration heaped high around every roadblock built by caste-system and the scarcity of economic opportunity in a retarded country. India is sick and needs a doctor. Mahatma Gandhi's great following has been ascribed to the fact that he is widely regarded as a semi-God and is an acute statesman. People have debated whether he is a saint or a political boss. I think he is above all India's doctor.

Gandhi has raised the self-esteem of Indians. The British erected power barrages and laid railroads but demoralized the population. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru told me at New Delhi that "it is only in the

lost 22 or 23 years since Gandhi launched his programme of non-violent non-co-operation that the national sentiment re-asserted itself".

Gandhi is the father of India's defiance and its symbol. Gandhi walks to sea to make salt in defiance of the British. It becomes a popular pilgrimage. The idealism of the youth spills into it. So does the leaderless nation's yearning for a leader. Gandhi has given his followers the elation of standing up to a foreigner who is the master in their house.

Gandhi's non-violence is not pacifism. It is not a refusal to fight. It is the weapon with which Gandhi fights. Fasts are weapons too—fasts and faith and ideals and harmony among those who are different. The greatest music is produced by a symphony orchestra.

I talked to Hindus, Moslems and Parsis who did not recognize Gandhi as their leader. But they recognized his services to Indian self-respect and national consciousness. Gandhi has turned the passivity and supineness of the Indian into an instrument of struggle. He used the docility bred by the British rule as a weapon against the British rulers.

LETTERS AND VISITORS

MAHATMA GANDHI'S work these days consists mainly of correspondence and receiving visitors from all over the world, seeking advice and guidance, listening to newspapers as they are read out to him, giving instructions about answering letters, and reading books which are of particular interest to him.

Mr. Pyare Lal, one of the busiest secretaries in the world, and a faithful attendant if there is one, disposes of most of the correspondence. Gandhiji sees only a few letters, which are generally read out to him, and instructions are taken down of the manner in which they should be answered. Nothing else can be done with the heavy mail that is received every day. Gandhiji writes a few letters himself. These must be such as to be generally to old friends or to sick people whom he knows. He replies mostly in Hindi and in Gujarati to those who know that language. English is used only when absolutely necessary. The correspondence is of various kinds and comes from all parts of the globe. There is not a question or a conundrum which is not addressed to him, the idea being that he is wiser than Solomon and nature has given him an extra pair of eyes to delve deep into all problems, political, social, religious, personal and ethical. Some of the letters are written in easily known Indian languages and often a search has got to be made for the man who knows that particular language.

The mail includes newly published books, which are sent by the authors and publishers either as tributes of affection and esteem or for 'kind opinion'. These would make a handsome library. There is reason to believe that they are kept where they should be, which does not happen to less fortunate individuals.

It is one of the unpleasant jobs of Mr. Pyare Lal to keep off the numerous visitors. He does it at times without ruth, at times with real tact, as occasion

as regularly as the Hindu prayer, Gandhiji is very catholic in his outlook. Recently an avowed atheist, was placed before him for conversion. I do not exactly remember what happened by way of argument between them. But Gandhiji was satisfied that an atheist with a good character and a spirit of service could reform the world as well as the most prayerful individual. A godly man is as good as one who believes in God.

"Gurudev's life was a continuous poem of service. He served Hindustan to the last breath of his life," observed Gandhiji while paying homage to Tagore on the occasion of the latter's death anniversary—Mahatma Gandhi, speaking at the prayer meeting said that, as it was Gurudev's (Rabindranath Tagore's) birthday, he could speak on nothing but on him.

A picture of the poet had been put on the dias.

Drawing the attention of the audience to it. Mahatma Gandhi said that the inscription under the portrait was: "The light that never failed." Gurudev's body, he said, was reduced to ashes but the radiance that had been within him was like the sun which would shine so long as life on this earth lasted. but the light, he said, was for the soul as the sun was for the body.

Gurudev, said Gandhiji, was a poet and a literary star of the first magnitude. He wrote in his mother tongue and all Bengal was able to drink deep at the fountain of his poetry. Translations of his works existed in many languages. He was a great writer in English too perhaps almost without knowing it.

Mahatma Gandhi added: "Gurudev had school education but he could boast of no university degree. He was just Gurudev. One Viceroy had called him the Poet of Asia a title that no one before him had had. He was also a world poet and, what was more, a "Rishi". He had left us "Gitanjali" the poems which brought him world fame. The great Tulsidas left us his immortal Ramayana. The renowned Vedvyas left us a history of mankind. They were not mere poets; they were teachers. Gurudev too wrote not only as a poet but as a "Rishi". Writing however, was not his only gift. He was an artist, a dancer, a singer with all the sweetness and purity that art in its finest sense should contain. His creative genius has also given us Santiniketan, Sriniketan and Viswabharati.

These breathe a spirit and are a legacy not only to Bengal but to India. Santiniketan has become, as it were, a place of pilgrimage to us all. He was not in his life-time, able to make of these institutions what he had dreamed for them. What man can achieve in the fulfilment of man's purpose is in God's hands, but they are monuments to his endeavour and are a constant reminder to us of the passionate love he had for his country and the service he rendered to her. They had just heard the national song. He wrote a song which has found a place in our national life. How often is the inspiring refrain heard from thousands of voices. It is not only a song but also like a devotional hymn.

Mahatma Gandhi ended by exhorting the people to learn the lessons of love of country, love of the world and selfless service from the noble example which Gurudev had left.

A SOVEREIGN WITHOUT SERVANTS

MAHATMA GANDHI does not employ servants. He needs none. All the things which he cannot do for himself are done by the people around him. Mr. Pyarelal is his chief secretary, looking after visitors and correspondents. Mr. Narhari Parekh and Mr. Hamenta Kumar Nilkantha, assisting him. Mr. Kanu Gandhi, his grand-nephew, attends on him, and besides keeps accounts and helps in conducting the prayers. Dr. Shushila Nayar, who runs a model village dispensary at Sevagram, takes special care on the health of the Mahatma who, she tells me, is on the whole a difficult patient, who will obey the doctor very well once he makes up his mind to do so.

After prayers are over, Gandhiji sits on the platform to sign autographs. The tariff is five rupees a signature. He can sign in fourteen languages. The collections go to the Harijan Fund.

A wooden plank with a thin mattress on it is all the bed on which Gandhiji sleeps. Formerly he used to have three pillows, but now he wants none. He spends eight hours in bed under medical advice and rests for half an hour to one hour during the day in 24 hours. It is rarely disturbed. At times he is restless, as a result of heavy work or when he is wrestling with a difficult question. He does not believe in reading himself or being read to sleep.

Gandhiji, as is well known, takes very spare but carefully chosen food, which he eats with an artificial set of teeth. Before he goes out for his walk in the

morning he takes 16 ounces of orange juice and a teaspoonful of amla-ka-murabba, which contains vitamin C, and generally an ounce of gur (Jaggery).

His lunch at 11-30 consists mainly of six to eight ounces of boiled vegetables, and about two ounces of raw vegetables. Salt is taboo. Add to these 1—2 ounces of bread of a special kind which is made of wheat flour and goat milk and appears like a home-made cream-cracker. Years ago he took a vow not to touch milk as animal food, but ill-health on one occasion compelled him to go in for goat milk. It is the special responsibility of his host or hostess to get ready a number of goats in advance of his stay. An alternate menu consists of boiled dates and apples, with mangoes thrown in during the season. The 'tea' consists of eight ounces of hot water with honey and soda bicarbonate.

The food of the Ashramites is a little more liberal, containing wheat and rice and 'vegetables with salt, and onions added to taste.

Lady Thackersay, his hostess at Morarji Castle at Mahableshwar, left nothing to chance where her distinguished guest was concerned. He was her guest at Parnakuti in Poona, after the Epic Fast of 1943 and after his release in 1944. She pays unstinted attention to the women's University of Poona, founded with the splendid benefaction of her husband, the late Sir Vthaldas Thackersay, Millionaire, millowner and legislator. She is a member of Central Board of Education and one of the governing spirits of the Vanita Vishram, of Bombay, which has been founded for the uplift, of women. Last year she was the chairwoman

of the reception committee of the All-India Educational Conference. She speaks English perfectly and has travelled round the world twice.

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The daily routine goes on undisturbed wherever the Mahatma is, whether in the plains at Sevagram or on the hills at Mahableswar. Its key-notes are three. No waste of time; no waste of efforts, and keen watchfulness. Mahatma Gandhi is a past master in the art of husbanding his physical resources for the vast amount of highly responsible he has to do.

AT THE FEET OF THE MASTER.

LOUIS FISCHER, whose article on the Indian problem, are being read with great interest all over



Angels of Peace : Mahatma Gandhi and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan in a pensive mood, during a twilight tour in Bihar with their eyes fixed beyond the horizon of handloom life and mumbo-jumbo of politics, to burnt and broken huts and homes.



the country is a free lance American journalist who visited India recently and saw things for himself. Louis Fischer was born in the slums of Philadelphia. His father sold fish and fruit from a pushcart. "I can still hear his cry, 'Peaches, fresh peaches'" says Fischer. But Fischer was ambitious. He set out for Europe and soon carved out a name for himself. He went to Russia, married a Russian girl and came into close contact with the leaders of the Soviet Union. His book "Men and Politics" is considered as the sequel to the chronicles of Gunthur and others.

Louis Fischer, whose quest for lost causes has turned him into a veritable Wandering Jew, sought out Gandhiji at Panchgani during the week, wrote Pyare Lal in "*Harijan*". Espousing worthy causes is with him a biological necessity. He regards the Indian problem as being central to world peace. In 1942, in the course of a famous interview, he helped Gandhiji to discover and remedy a vital gap in the Quit India proposal. Now that India is once more at the cross-roads, he has again found his occupation here.

He had seen Gandhiji at Poona before the A.I. C.C. meeting. But it did not give him full satisfaction. "Somehow I could not come to grips with the main problem as I could in 1942", he remarked afterwards. He had his revenge this time during a series of three interviews that he had with Gandhiji on two successive days. The talks covered a variety of subjects from the proposed Constituent Assembly, the Hindu-Muslim problem and untouchability to socialism, non-violence and the ethics of retaliatory measures against

South Africa, interspersed with lighter intervals in which quick thrust and parry served to relieve the strain of more serious discussions.

A SOVEREIGN BODY ?

Fischer opened with a broadside on the question of the Constituent Assembly. "I would go into the Constituent Assembly and use it for a different purpose—as a battle-field—and declare it to be a sovereign body. What do you say to this?"

"It is no use declaring somebody else's creation a sovereign body," said Gandhiji. "After all, it is a British creation. A body does not become a sovereign body by merely asserting it. To become a sovereign, you have to behave in a sovereign way. Three tailors of Tooley Street in Johannesburg declared that they were a sovereign body. It ended in nothing. It was just a farce.

"I do not consider the proposed Constituent Assembly to be non-revolutionary. I have said, and I mean it cent per cent, that the proposed Constituent Assembly is an effective substitute for civil disobedience of the constructive type. Whilst I have the greatest admiration for the self-denial and spirit of sacrifice of our Socialist friends, I have never concealed the sharp difference between their method and mine. They frankly believe in violence and all that is in its bosom. I believe in non-violence through and through."

SOCIALIST WITH A DIFFERENCE

THAT turned the discussion on to socialism.

"You are a socialist and so are they," interpolated Fischer.

Gandhiji: "I am, they are not. I was a socialist before many of them were born. I carried conviction to a rabid socialist in Johannesburg, but that is neither here nor there. My claim will live when their socialism is dead."

"What do you mean by your socialism?"

"My socialism means 'even unto the last.' I do not want to rise on the ashes of the blind, the deaf and the dumb. In their socialism, probably these have no place. Their one aim is material progress. For instance, America aims at having a car for every citizen. I do not. I want freedom for full expression of my personality. I must be free to build a staircase to Sirius if I want to. That does not mean that I want to do any such thing. Under the other socialism, there is no individual freedom. You own nothing, not even your body."

"Yes, but there are variations. My socialism in its modified form means that the State does not own everything. It does in Russia. There you certainly do not own your body even. You may be arrested at any time, though you may have committed no crime. They may send you wherever they like."

"Does not under your socialism, the State own your children and educate them in your way it likes?"

"All States do that, America does it."

"Then America is not very different from Russia."

"You really object to dictatorship."

"But socialism is dictatorship or else arm-chair philosophy. I call myself a Communist also."

"Oh, don't. It is terrible for you to call yourself a Communist. I want what you want, what Jaiprakash and the Socialists want: a free world. But the Communists don't. They want a system which enslaves the body and the mind."

"Would you say that of Marx?"

"The Communists have corrupted the Marxist teaching to suit their purpose."

"What about Lenin?"

"Lenin started it. Stalin has since completed it. When the Communists come to you, they want to get into the Congress and control the Congress and use it for their own ends."

"So do the Socialists. My communism is not very different from Socialism. It is a harmonious blending of the two. Communism, as I have understood it, is a natural corollary of socialism."

"Yes, you are right. There was a time when the two could not be distinguished. But today Socialists are very different from Communists."

"You mean to say, you do not want communism of Stalin's type."

"But the Indian Communists want communism of the Stalin type in India and want to use your name for that purpose."

"They won't succeed."

PLAYING THE GAME

Fischer reverted to the Constituent Assembly. "So you will not yourself go into the Constituent Assembly, but will support it."

"Yes. But it is wrong to say we are going to the Constituent Assembly to seize power. Though it is not a sovereign body, it is as near it as possible."

"Pandit Jawaharlal said that if the British tried to impose a treaty in terms of the State Paper of May 16, he will tear it up."

"Yes, an imposed treaty from outside."

"And he said, Congress will not go into groupings."

"Yes. I have said the same thing—unless the Federal Court or some other court gives a different decision. As I see it, much can come out of the Constituent Assembly, if the British will play the game."

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

"You say and I believe they will" remarked Fischer. "But supposing they do not, won't you then offer your form of protest?"

"Not until the conditions are favourable. But it is wrong to speculate about the future, still more so to anticipate failure. If we take care of the present, the future will take care of itself."

UNTOUCHABILITY AND COMMUNAL QUESTION.

They then passed on to the question of Hindu-Muslim unity. Gandhiji started his visitor by proffering the remark that the Hindu-Muslim question in the final analysis, was an offshoot of the untouchability question. "When Hinduism is perfectly reformed and purged of the last race of untouchability, there will be no communal problem left."

"I have heard," remarked Fischer, "that though the Congress Harijans have won at the elections against non-Congress Harijans, they were able to do so only with the Hindu votes".

"What was the joint election for, if not to enable the caste-Hindus to make a selection from successful candidates at the primary elections," replied Gandhiji. "No failed candidate at the primary elections can offer himself as a candidate at the joint elections. Moreover, it is not correct to say, as has been claimed, that in the majority of cases, the Congress Harijans won against the non-Congress candidates with the caste-Hindu votes. In Madras the non-Congress Harijans were defeated almost to a man in the primary elections, wherever they contested them. In the majority of cases the Congress Harijans were returned unopposed."

"Some of them want separate electorates," remarked Fischer.

"Yes. But we have resisted it. By separate electorates they put themselves outside the pale of Hinduism and perpetuate the bar sinister."

"That is true. But, anyhow, they might say that Hindus have put them outside the pale."

"But today the Hindus are penitent."

"Are they adequately penitent?"

"I am sorry to say 'not yet'. If they were, there would be no untouchability and no communal problem as I have already said."

"Is there less social contact between the Hindus and Muslims?" next asked Fischer

"No, rather the contrary. But politically there is a bar, thanks to Lord Minto."

ETHICS OF RECIPROCITY

After a little sword-play Fischer changed over to another topic.

"Your young men are too Indo-centric," he said.

"That is only partly true. I won't say we have become international," replied Gandhiji, "but we have taken up forlorn causes, e.g., the cause of the exploited nations, because we are ourselves the chief exploited nation."

"The growing anti-White feeling here is bad," proceeded Gandhiji's interviewer. In Taj Mahal Hotel they have put up a notice 'South Africans not admitted.' I do not like it. Your non-violence should make you more generous."

"That won't be non-violence. To-day the White man rules in India. So, if Taj Mahal has the presumption to put up that notice, it is a feather in its cap."

.. Fischer's liberalism felt hurt. "That is what any nationalist will say. You must say something better," he remarked.

"Then I will be a nationalist for once," replied Gandhiji with firmness. "They have no right to be here if they do not deal with Indians on terms of equality."

.. "No right-yes." rejoined Fischer. "But you must give them more than their right. You must invite them."

"Yes, when I am the Viceroy."

"You mean the President of the Indian Republic."

"No, I will be quite content to be the Viceroy, a constitutional Viceroy, for the time being," said Gandhiji. "The first thing I will do, will be to vacate the Viceregal Lodge and give it to the Harijans. I will then invite the South African White visitors to my hut and say to them: 'You have ground my people to powder. But we won't copy you. We will give you more than you deserve. We won't lynch you as you do in South Africa, and thus shame them into doing the right.'"

"There is so much anti-White feeling to-day," put in Fischer somewhat troubled in mind.

"Of course, I am opposed to that. It can do no good to anybody."

"The world is so divided. And there might be another war and that may be between the Coloured and the White races."

"Europe is terribly exhausted. But with the atom bomb human beings don't matter so much. A few scientists are enough. The next war will be carried on by pressing a few buttons. That is why colour-war is so dangerous."

"Anything is better than cowardice. It is violence double-distilled." And to illustrate his remark Gandhiji narrated the story of a Negro clergyman with a Herculean frame in South Africa saying "Pardon me brother when insulted in a White man's compartment. "That is not non-violence. It is a travesty of Jesus' teaching. It would have been more manly to retaliate."

"You are not afraid of what happens to you but what it may mean to others," replied Fischer, analysing the illustration adduced by Gandhiji. "It takes a great deal of irresponsibility to give vent to your feelings and slap the White man under the circumstances described by you. In India the situation is different. The White men are not so numerous here."

"You are mistaken," replied Gandhiji. "Why, one Englishman is killed and a whole village is razed to the ground as a reprisal. What vindictiveness!"

A CONUNDRUM ANSWERED

That finished the first day's discussion. But some conundrums about Gandhiji's attitude in regard to the Constituent Assembly continued to trouble Fischer's mind and he reverted to them in the course of his discussion the next day.

"If the Working Committee had reacted to your 'groping in the dark' or as you have called it your instinct about the long-term proposals, they would have rejected them."

"Yes, but I did not let them," replied Gandhiji.

"You mean you did not insist."

"More than that. I prevented them from following my instinct unless they also felt likewise. It is no use conjecturing what would have happened. The fact however remains that Dr. Rajendra Prasad asked me: 'Does your instinct go so far that you would prevent us from accepting the long-term proposals, whether we understand you or not?' I said, 'No. Follow your reason since my own reason does not support my instinct. My instinct rebels against my reason. I have placed my misgivings before you as I want to be faithful to you. I myself have not followed any instinct unless my reason backed it.'"

"But you have said that you follow your instinct when it speaks to you on occasions as, for instance, you did before certain fasts that you undertook."

"Yes, but even in these cases, before the fast began, my reason was able to back my instinct. My reason failed my instinct on the long-term proposals."

"Then, why did you inject your 'instinct' into the political situation?"

"Because I was loyal to my friends. I wanted to retain my faith in the 'bona fides' of the Cabinet Mission. So I told the Cabinet Mission also about

my misgivings. I said to myself, 'Supposing they meant ill, they would feel ashamed.'"

A TESTAMENT OF FAITH

"YOU are strongly constitutionalist now. Is it for fear of the alternative—violence?" finally asked Fischer.

"No. If India is destined to go through a blood faith, it will do so. The thing I would fear is my own cowardice or dishonesty. I have neither. So I say, we must go in and work it out. If they are dishonest, they will be found out. The loss will be not ours but theirs."

"I think you are afraid of the spirit of violence. It is widespread. I wonder whether it has not captured the mood of the youth and you are aware of it, and you fear that mood."

"It has not captured the imagination of the country. I admit that it has captured the imagination of a section of the youth."

"It is a mood that has got to be combated."

"Yes, I am doing it in my own way. It is my implicit faith that it is a survival which will kill itself in time. It cannot live. It is so contrary to the spirit of India. But what is the use of talking? I believe in an inscrutable Providence which presides over our destinies—call it God or by any other name you like. All I contend is that it is not the fear of violence that makes me advise that country to go to the Constituent Assembly. It is repugnant in a non-violent attitude not to accept an honourable substitute for civil revolt."

GANDHI'S IDEAL MAN

Thus wrote Pyare Lal :—

The late Shri Mahadev Desai was the beau ideal of a secretary of Gandhiji's conception. Gandhiji once described him as son, secretary and lover rolled into one. On another occasion he described the latter's relationship with him as that of a 'Hindu wife'—mutually complementary and indissoluble; it was a "marriage of true souls". It would not be therefore out of place to give here an epitome of his career with Gandhiji.

After his university career and a varied experience, first as a clerk in the Oriental Translator's Office during which he was much in request as a friend in need not only by his colleagues but his superiors also, then as a lawyer and as an Inspector of Co-operative Societies, followed by a short spell of private secretaryship to a well-known Bombay Home-Rule Leaguer.

He came to Gandhiji in 1917 at Kochrab Ashram and immediately realized that he had found the master. His first experience here was as a copyist and amanuensis. He not only won Gandhiji's admiration by producing faultless copies in his elegant, printlike hand at an incredible speed but brought to bear his intelligence and critical faculty on his work, suggesting alterations and improvements in the original wherever necessary. When, some time later, he held back from publication, on his own initiative, an article that Gandhiji had sent, as it seemed to contain a statement or an argument of doubtful character, Gandhiji on his part felt that he had found his ideal secretary.

In those early days, before the Mahatmic handicap forced upon Gandhiji the irony of travelling in third-class reserved bogies, he used to travel often in the ordinary third-class all by himself. After Shri Desai joined him he accompanied him on these journeys and acted as his (Gandhiji's) 'hammal'. He looked after Gandhiji's travelling kit, made his bed, cooked his food, washed his thick, heavy Khadi clothes and cleaned his commode, besides rendering secretarial assistance. After the successful Champaran Satyagraha campaign, he settled down with Gandhiji in Motihari, where with his wife and other co-workers he taught the three Rs to the village children.

It was also during this period that he had his real schooling in those values and norms that have come to be associated with Gandhiji's name, e.g. simplicity coupled with elegance, meticulous regard for neatness and cleanliness, capacity for concentration in the midst of turmoil and chaos, preference for manual skill over mechanical perfection and a passionate love of the mother tongue. "He would insist on my writing the most important dispatches on the crudest hand-made paper and that too with a reed pen!" he once told me. "He was proud of my handwriting said it was good enough for any Viceroy, no matter how and on what paper I wrote. Sometimes, he even snatched away the steel pen from my hand and flung it out of the railway carriage window." In the use of Gujarati the disciple soon learnt to excel the master and in later years often claimed for himself the role of Gandhiji's instructor in Gujarati, a claim which Gandhiji has since often admitted.

Right through the war Conference days (1916) and the Anti-Rowlatt Act Agitation, he followed Gandhiji like a shadow, quietly watching, assimilating, rehearsing. Then came the Khilafat and non-co-operation movements and Gandhiji was sucked into the vortex of the unprecedented storm that overswept the country. That gave Shri Desai his chance; he found himself. He began writing his compendious Boswellian diaries which continued without a break till practically his last day. The last entry, I think, is dated August 14, 1942. On the morning of the 15th he was no more. Wisdom was gleaned and garnered in these tomes straight from the master's lips. So great was his passion for recording that lacking paper, I have actually seen him taking down jottings of important talks on the margin of newspapers, backs of currency notes, sometimes even on thumb and finger nails, to be transferred to the regular note book at the first opportunity.

He constituted himself into a living encyclopaedia of Gandhiji's thoughts and ideas and a final court of appeal where the authenticity of a particular act or utterance ascribed to Gandhiji could be checked and verified. No one dared to misquote or misrepresent Gandhiji during Shri Desai's lifetime without the Nasmyth hammer of the latter descending upon him with all the weight of the evidence of his contemporary notes.

It would be difficult to enumerate all the varied assignments, some of them of a highly confidential and even unbelievable nature (alas! they cannot be

divulged), which he fulfilled for Gandhiji with a D'Artagnanlike unfailing fidelity and success.

Throughout his career I do not remember a single occasion when he failed Gandhiji in an emergency or left him in the lurch. As co-editor with the late George Joseph of the 'Independent' of Allahabad and later, on the latter's arrest, as the sole editor of that daily, he won warm encomiums from the fastidious and exacting late Pandit Motilal Nehru by his personal charm and highly specialized knowledge of Gandhiji and his non-co-operation technique, no less than by his trenchant and versatile pen. When security was demanded of that paper he closed it and under Gandhiji's instructions brought it out in manuscript form. Some of his colleagues on the staff, new to Gandhiji's ways, could not appreciate the new venture and felt it to be a bit 'infra dig' to co-operate in it. I happened to be there at that time, having been sent by Gandhiji to keep the flag flying in the event of Shri Desai's arrest which was considered imminent. Undaunted by the non-co-operation of his colleagues, Shri Desai told them that he had not served apprenticeship under Gandhiji in vain and would bring out the paper unassisted, if it came to that; and brought it out, that very evening, the first copy being all in Shri Desai's own beautiful hand. I think, it fetched a fancy price of Rs. 250.

After the Bardoli Satyagraha of 1928 he was sent by Gandhiji to assist Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in the collection and marshalling of evidence before the Broomfield Inquiry Committee. Such was the im-

pression he created by his ability and integrity that before the end of the inquiry both Judge Broomfield and Sir Reginald Maxwell claimed him as a 'friend'. That each expressed his 'friendship' in his own typical way, the one by writing him "love letters", the other by issuing orders for his rigorous isolation, almost amounting to solitary confinement in Belgaum prison, is a different story.

By nature Shri Desai was rather of the contemplative and scholarly type. Action was not his forte. Taking orders, rather than issuing them was his chief delight. "I am more accustomed to stand behind a chair than in front of one", he once wittily remarked when called by the chairman to come alongside of him and address a public meeting. But when occasion demanded it he plunged into the fray with the same wholeheartedness and sense of devotion as characterized him in other fields. A typical illustration of this was afforded in 1930 at the time of the Dandi march, when in the absence of the Sardar, he set the whole of Gujarat from one end to the other ablaze with Satyagraha.

As he progressed from apprenticeship to maturity, he showed more and more initiative and capacity for handling important missions all by himself. But to the last he remained like Arjuna, with all his marvellous bowmanship, essentially a virtuous, a faithful instrument in the hand of the master, the inspirer.

At the time of the Rajkot fast he was at New Delhi undergoing treatment for an illness from which he really never recovered. But as soon as he got the news, he left his sick-bed without a moment's thought

had set to work contacting the highest officials, including Lord Linlithgow. It was his faithful and able presentation of Gandhiji's viewpoint before those concerned that contributed not a little to the settlement in favour of Gandhiji and the Sardar. After the Greyer Award, he accompanied Gandhiji to Rajkot, where even Darbar Veerawalla found it impossible to resist him after the glowing account he had of him from the cynical, hard-boiled Sir Bertrand Glancy, whom Shri Desai had met at New Delhi as the head of the Political Department of the Government of India.

During the individual Satyagraha of 1940, he denied himself the luxury of jail-going as he did not want to leave Gandhiji short-handed. But soldier-like he set out later to collect the 5 lakhs fund for the Gujarat Flood Relief work in the absence of the Sardar and completed it by working even when he was laid on his back with double pneumonia. Again, he set out to organize peace brigades in Ahmedabad at the time of the Hindu-Muslim riots, leaving his wife on what was believed by the doctors to be her death-bed, with the same unfailing devotion to duty as he had shown on a previous occasion, when with streaming eyes, he finished his writing for "Navajivan" before setting out for his village home on receiving the news of his father's death.

In the intervals there was of course the killing daily grind of office routine which sometimes made him complain of what he humorously used to call his "dog's life". His versatility was equal to his industry. He was equally at home in taking on

In Gandhiji's 'family' of workers he was the cementing bond, the shock-absorber, the activizer. He smoothed differences, soothed frayed tempers, solved personal problems resolved, doubts, pulled people out of trouble when they landed themselves in it and negotiated delicate points with Gandhiji when it called for extraordinary tact and his masterly manner, for which he had become famous. He was extremely popular owing to his overthrowing kindness, goodness of heart, broad sympathy and understanding and his willingness and capacity to serve and lend a helping hand whenever there was a chance, to all and sundry.

For instance, Gandhiji could give only limited time to his visitors who came for consultation. He could speak to them in sutras only. But Shri Desai made for Gandhiji's "Be quick, be brief, be gone" motto that hangs on the wall of his hut above his head, and the visitors as a rule did not feel satisfied unless they could round off their interview with Gandhiji with a good heart-to-heart talk with his Secretary. It was also his unpleasant duty to keep off undesirable visitors. And what a motley crowd he had sometimes to deal with, ranging from dyspeptics and food-faddists to dilettantes, literateurs blue stockings, tourists, pressmen and politicians, seekers after metaphysical knowledge, sometimes even lunatics! All this required a Job's patience. No wonder sometimes when a particularly sticky customer claimed him, even his suavity could not keep down a persecuted and martyred look on his face which was pathetic to behold. Friends discreetly avoided his gaze on such occasions lest they might betray a

smile on the wrong side of the face! But he was happy in the knowledge that it meant saving thousands of precious hours of the master for the service of the country and humanity.

Let no one, however, imagine that he was merely a "faithful echo" of the master. When occasion demanded he could also speak up to him, since Gandhiji expects his Secretary and in fact any one who is closely associated with him, to be his conscience-keeper too. He was often prized as a tower of strength by those who brought to Gandhiji a different viewpoint from his own, and he himself was able on one occasion to avert an unconditional fast unto death on the part of Gandhiji when every one else had failed. It is the only instance of its kind in Gandhiji's entire life within my knowledge.

On occasions, but very rare occasions, there were brushes. These were invariably of the nature of "lovers' quarrels". Once Shri Desai likened his association with Gandhiji to sitting on the top of a volcano which might erupt at any moment. At Delang the "quarrel" even found its way into the weekly letter when, in a moment of desperation, the devoted Secretary exclaimed with Dr. Halliday Sutherland (*Arches of the Years*) that "to live with saints in heaven" was "a bliss and a glory" but "to live with a saint on earth" was "a different story." The article itself was of apiece with the quotation. With characteristic coolness, Gandhiji bluepencilled portions of the truant disciple's outpourings to "save him against himself", suitably corrected the rest and published the whole in *Harijan*!

One another occasion, when exasperated by the heavy demands made by rules of Ashram life, he tendered his resignation, Gandhiji tore it up saying that did not bear evidence of 'coherent thinking' and therefore could not be accepted as an indication of "Mahadev's real mind." The ending was equally characteristic. Before many hours the "blues" had completely worn off and the ardent Secretary was explaining to the appreciative master the beauties of a gorgeous sunset. But it reduced the sensitive Shri Desai to tears when Gandhiji once gently rebuked him (it was reproach more than rebuke) for an inadvertant error in description by remarking "Is it thus you are going to interpret me after my death?"

It has become the fashion these days to compare the late Shri Desai with Boswell. The comparison might hold good so far as passion for gathering and recording biographical material of their respective masters was concerned. But there the comparison ends. In mental and intellectual stature they were as poles asunder. Shri Desai was great in his own rights, Boswell's attitude towards his master was that of an ardent hero-worshipper and a cheap and vulgar one at that at times. Shri Desai's attitude towards Gandhiji was that of a spiritual devotee to his 'guru' and a lover of the motherland towards the promised deliverer.

Shri Desai's was a consecrated life characterised by a rare single-minded devotion to Gandhiji and his ideals. Gandhiji lived for the world but Shri Desai lived for Gandhiji. In one of the Goethe's plays every

one who gazes into the face of the heroine sees in it the countenance of his beloved. In the case of the late Shri Desai, it was the reverse; he lived only to read the lineaments of his master in every celebrated character of history or legend that he contemplated whether it was Asquith or William of Orange, Ruskin or Tolstoy, Marx, Lenin or Masaryk, Fenelon or St. Francis of Assisi. In the immortal lines of Moore:

"The moon looks into many brooks
The brook can see no moon but this"

I have been asked to set down as addenda the experience of Shri Mahadev Desai's successor in office. The truth of the matter is that the late Shri Mahadev Desai was not a mere occupant of an office he was an institution. His office began and ended with himself. He left behind him no successor.

CHAPTER VI

Prayer and Politics

*Allah gives light in darkness,
Allah gives rest in pain,
Cheeks that are white with weeping,
Allah paints red again.*

*The flowers and the blossoms wither,
Years vanish with flying feet;
But my heart will live on for ever,
That here in sadness beat.*

*Gladly to Allah's dwelling
Yonder would I take flight;
There will the darkness vanish,
There will my eyes have sight.*

—SIEGFRIED AUGUST MAHLMANN

[Translated from German by Longfellow.]

PRAYER plays a very important part in the political life of Mahatma Gandhi. And his prayer meetings are attended by the Muslims as well as the Hindus. For him Allah and Ram are one and the same thing. It is Allah alone that gives Gandhi light in darkness.

I

PRAYER IN GANDHI'S LIFE

GANDHIJI'S two nephews, both of whom

were once in the party and who are artists to their finger tips, went abreast of Gandhiji and one informed him, with a glow of joy on his face, that he was planning to bring out an album of his younger brother's sketches, depicting Gandhiji's daily life from dawn to dusk.

"But do not forget," remarked Gandhiji, "to portray the place of prayer in my life."

"Certainly not, father", said the nephew, "only the relevant sketch will come at the end of the whole series."

"No," observed Gandhiji with the dignified definiteness of Truth: "It should come at the beginning. For, prayer is the very foundation, and not a fulfilment, of my life and labour. I have been able to live for days without any food, but I have never passed a single day without prayer."

"Further," continued the nephew "suitable titles and texts will be added to the sketches."

"But see to it that they are very brief," commented Gandhiji, "for a picture must speak for itself."

Casually, Gandhiji referred to the art of photography and observed that at times the "camera-fans" went beyond all limits of decorum. For instance, quite often have they tried to click their cameras at him when at the time of prayer he has been trying to collect his thoughts into tranquillity for the purpose of being in tune with the Infinite. What is not generally realized on such occasions is that there are certain things in life, which are too sacred to be

allowed to be tampered with by any adventitious incongruous element.

"People's craze to hero-worship you," interposed the independent-minded elder nephew, "has gone too far. Before long they would be burning incense to you as if to a God. Why do you not condemn their irrational enthusiasm for you".

"Only if you knew," said Gandhiji with pain writ large on his face, "how times out of number I have ruthlessly condemned them. But they still persist in their own ways of expressing their affection for me."

"How to think of God," Mahatma Gandhi gives the following answer to the question in "*Harijan*".

"True meditation consists in closing the eyes and ears of the mind to all else except the object of one's devotion. Hence the closing of eyes during prayers is an aid to such concentration. Man's conception of God is naturally limited. Each one has, therefore, to offer his prayers as best appeals to him, provided that the conception is pure."

"I must repeat for the thousandth time that "Ram Nam" is one of the many names for God. The same prayer meetings have recitations from the Quran and Zend Avesta. Devout Muslims for the very reason that they are devout have never objected to the chanting of "Ram Nam". "Ram Nam" is not an idle chant. It is conceived as a mode of addressing the all-pervasive God, known to me as to millions of Hindus by the familiar name of "Ram Nam". "Nam"

at the end of "Ram" is the most significant part. It means the name without the Rama of history. Be that as it may, why should an open profession by me of my faith offend anybody, much less the Muslim League? 'No one is obliged to join these meetings and having joined is not obliged to take part in the chant. All that the visitors are expected to do is not to mar the harmony of the meeting and to tolerate the proceedings, even when they are not in sympathy with any party.

"As to the use of the phrase 'Rama-Rajya', why should it offend after having defined its meaning many times? It is a convenient and expressive phrase, the meaning of which no alternative can so fully express to millions. When I visit the Frontier Province or address predominantly Muslim audiences I would express my meaning to them by calling it 'Khudai Raj' while to a Christian audience I would describe it as the 'Kingdom of God on earth'. Any other mode would for me be self-suppression and hypocrisy."

SIGNIFICANCE OF RAM NAM

"God is not a person. He is the all-pervading, all-powerful spirit. Anyone who bears Him in his or her heart has accession of a marvellous force or energy as objective in its results as say, electricity but much subtler, continuing Gandhiji said in explaining the significance of Ram Nam. Was he propagating a species of superstition? he asked. No, was his reply. Mere repetition of Ram Nam was not like black magic: It had to be taken with all that it symbolised. Rather, it was like a mathematical formula, which summed up, in brief, the result, of endless research. Mere mecha-

nical repetition of Ram Nam could not give strength; for that one had to understand and live up to the conditions attaching to its recitation. To take God's name one had to live a godly life.

Mahatma Gandhi said that the object of their attending prayers was to commune with God and turn the searchlight inwards so that with God's help they could overcome their weaknesses.

He believed that one imbibed pure thought in the company of the pure. Even if there was only one pure man in that gathering, the rest would be affected by that one man's purity. The condition was that they came with that intention, otherwise their coming to the prayers was meaningless.

Mahatma Gandhi went further and maintained that even if all had their weaknesses but came to the meeting with the intention of removing them, their co-operative effort made from day to day would quicken the progress of reforms. For even as co-operation in the economic or political field was necessary, so was co-operation much more necessary on the moral plane. That was the meaning of the prayer meetings which he had been holding since his return to India.

Therefore, he appealed to them to sit absolutely quite with their eyes closed so as to shut themselves off from outside thoughts for a few minutes at least. This co-operative prayer needed no fasts, no advertisement. It must be free from hypocrisy.

The view that the open maidan was truly the best temple of God was expressed by Mahatma Gandhi addressing prayer meeting. The rich and the poor, the

master and the servant, the millionaire and the labourer, the Hindu, the Muslim, the Parsi and the Christian, could all take part in the worship which took place in this temple which had the sky for its canopy and Mother Earth for the floor. Nobody could remove anybody from such a place. There was enough space for everybody to sit. He had seen many houses of art in Europe, many mosques and many temples. But he found that there was no better *mandir* than the open ground.

Gandhiji said "I never thought, of course, that we would become holy by going into a temple. It depends on our faith and belief. If a man worships Shiva and he goes to a temple of Vishno, he should not feel uneasy. Tulsidas said when he saw Krishna's image, he wanted to see the image with a bow and arrow. Tulsidas prayed that it should be so with all his heart and he saw Rama, in Krishna's image. He could create what he wanted because Rama was in his heart."

Gandhiji continued: "If we go to a temple where God is installed and come back from the temple and then indulge in wine, women and song, then our going to the temple is absolutely useless."

CREED OF NON-VIOLENCE HASN'T FAILED

THE Mahatma was answering written questions put to him on board the steamboat *Kiwi* taking him on his tour of East Bengal.

The first question said: "In view of the recent Indian history like the 1942 unrest R. I. N.

mutiny, Calcutta and other communal outbreaks can it be said your creed of non-violence has failed in so far as non-violence has not taken root in Indian life?"

The Mahatma replied: "This is a dangerous generalisation. All you mention can certainly be called 'Ahimsa' but that can never mean that the creed of non-violence has failed. At best it may be said that I have not yet found the technique required for the conversion of the mass mind, but I claim that the millions living in the seven lakh villages of India have not participated in the violence alluded to by you..

"Whether non-violence has taken root in Indian life is still an open question which can only be answered after my death."

The second question asked was: "What should one do in his day-day life to acquire the non-violence of the brave and what is the minimum programme in this direction?"

Mahatma Gandhi replying said: "The minimum that is required of a person wishing to cultivate the 'ahimsa' of the brave is first to clear one's thought of cowardice and in the light of the clearance, regulate his conduct in every activity, great or small.

"The votary must refuse to be cowed down by his superior, without being angry. He must, however, be ready to sacrifice his post, however remunerative it may be. Whilst sacrificing his all, if the votary

The sword of the Satyagrahi is love and the unshakeable firmness that comes from it. He will regard as brothers the hundreds of goondas that confront him and instead of trying to kill them he will choose to die at their hands and thereby live.

This is straight and simple. But how can a solitary Satyagrahi succeed in the midst of a huge population? Hundreds of hooligans were let loose on the city of Bombay for arson and loot. A solitary Satyagrahi will be like a drop in the ocean. Thus argues the correspondent.

My reply is that a Satyagrahi may never run away from danger, irrespective of whether he is alone or in the company of many. He will have fully performed his duty if he dies fighting. The same holds good in armed warfare. It applies with greater force in Satyagraha. Moreover, the sacrifice of one will evoke the sacrifice of many and may possibly produce big results.

Commenting on the happenings in South Africa, he remarked that the hooligans had beaten to death an Indian, whom they took for a Satyagrahi. It was a sad event.

Nevertheless, he felt happy, said the Mahatma. A Satyagrahi must always be ready to die with a smile on his face, without retaliation and without rancour in his heart. Some people had come to have a wrong idea that Satyagraha meant jail-going only; perhaps facing lathi-blows and nothing more. Such Satyagraha could not bring independence. To win inde-

pendence, they had to learn the art of dying without killing.

V

FASTS

Political fasts have a long history behind them in India and are described at great length by Kalhana who composed the *Rajatarangini*, a narrative of the Kings of Kashmir and one of the few historical works in Sanskrit, in the 12 Century A.D. for instance, when King Shankaravarman of Kashmir introduced forced labour for loads, the Brahmans started a fast for exemption from it. Once in the 11th century, the priests and other Brahmans went on hunger-strike at Parihasapur and compelled the king to dismiss an abnoxious favourite. In the same century a solemn fast, organised by Brahmans, constrained the king and his son to desist from a civil war and make peace for a while. Early in the 12th century, the plunder of the Agrahara at Akshosura by government servants provoked a fast which soon spread far and wide and assumed alarming proportions. It attracted large crowds but their plans to terminate it bore no fruit. Nor was the king more successful. The atmosphere was charged with electricity and a storm was not long delayed. Disturbances broke out and produced a crisis. The king betook himself to the hunger-strikers once again, but failed to arrange a settlement. A civil war now stalked the land and took a serious turn. The hunger-strikers were aghast at certain developments and gave up the fast. Kalhana's narrative suggests that some popular leaders in Kashmi

required a reputation for organising fasts and were reckoned at the royal court among those who delighted in the king's misfortunes. But there were occasions when a king himself might fast or threaten to fast. Early in the 12th century, for instance, King Uchchala felt indignant that there should occur any miscarriage of justice calculated to provoke a litigant to fast unto death as a protest. King Uchchal took a vow that in any such contingency he himself would fast unto death. As a result, the judges became very careful in pronouncing sentences.

Modern history records many fasts even unto death for instance, that by McSwiney, the Irish Mayor of Cork, as a protest against his own imprisonment and rule of the Black and Tans in Ireland after the last war. A few years later Yatindra Nath Dutta who was implicated in a conspiracy case fasted unto death in India.

VI

SPIRITUALISM AND ELECTRICISM

MAHATMA GANDHI'S fasts, however, seem to flow directly from the characteristics of his own nature and his moral and spiritual make-up. By far the most important fact about him is an intense spirituality, a living burning faith in God, and a ceaseless endeavour to attune his own life in thought, feeling and action into harmony with the divine spirit through heart-felt prayer, service and surrender or dedication to the divine will. The Mahatma's spirituality is free from all taint of sectarianism and represents an electric development within.

The ground-work is supplied by the Vedantic doctrine of every soul being an emanation from God and therefore, capable of harmony with every other soul. It is also the foundation of his faith in human nature, in the goodness, actual or potential, even of apparent miscreants and tyrants. It is the basis of all optimism and perseverance. But it also implies that a spiritual effort, if necessary in the form of self-inflicted suffering like fast, may be undertaken to awaken the spiritual energy dormant in others. The vital energy in ultimate analysis is one single whole and its vibrations in one personality can meet or rouse corresponding vibration in others. It is also relevant to point out the innumerable fasts are prescribed for spiritual development as well as for expiation of all sorts of serious offences and trivial lapses, in the Mahabharata and the Puranas, the Dharma Sutras such as those of Bhaudhayana, Gautama, Apastamba and Vashishtha and above all, in the metrical Dharma Shastras of Manu, Yajnavalkya, Narada, Parashara and others.

The threads of Vedanta Philosophy and Hindu ceremonial have been interwoven in the Mahatma's career with Jain ethics ever since a Jain monk, Becharji Swami, administered three vows to him on the eve of his departure for England at the age of eighteen. The bed-rock of Jain ethics is the doctrine of Ahimsa or non-injury to living beings, active beneficence manifesting itself also in ruth, honesty, self-control and stoicism or rather austerity. These are the five Anuvratas or preliminary vows of Jainism supplemented by three Gunavratas one of which (the Proshodhopavasa) enjoins regular fasts on certain days of the month and by five internal penances one of which,

(the Kayotsarga) permits fast unto death as the climax of renunciation including renunciation of passions like anger, vanity, greed and hate. This fast unto death is Sallekhāna, a title to saintly renown.

The Christian Tradition

The Hindu and Jain influences have been interfaced by Christian ethics and admiration for Christ's life which gripped the Mahatma during his sojourn in England from 1888 to 1891. Christ fasted for forty days prior to his ministry and suffered crucifixion for the sins of humanity. St. Paul fasted frequently. Early Christians often fasted before and after communion and on Wednesdays and Fridays specially during Lent, the forty days before Easter. The Roman Catholic Church and the Greek Orthodox Church declared the Lent fasts obligatory though they were diluted to limitation of variety and quantity of food. In any case the Christian tradition represents fast as conquest of the flesh and as preparation for a great mission.

VII

FASTS IN ISLAM

FOURTHLY, the holy Quran strictly enjoins day-fasts throughout the month of Ramzan for the sake of divine meditation, self-discipline and endurance. Moreover, the Prophet Mohammad often fasted and his example has led many Muslims to observe day-fasts on three bright days, from the 13th to the 15th, the Ayyam-i-biz, of the month (in accordance with the Islamic lunar calendar), on six days after Id in the month of Shawwal and on the first ten days of Moharram as well as on some other days in the year

Fasting, in fact, has been an item in the spiritual career from immemorial antiquity down to the present day.

VIII

SPIRITUALITY AND POLITICS

It is true that the fasts enjoined or recommended by the great religious teachers are spiritual, not political, in motive and character. But the distinguishing feature of Gandhiji's career is an unprecedented experiment of breaking down the barriers between the temporal and the spiritual. In his drive towards spiritualising politics he has carried fasts into public life as part of the equipment.

The Mahatma's spiritual fervour has intensified the humanitarianism which leads to identification with the social interest in the widest context and finds satisfaction in social service. To this must be added dynamism of disposition as one of the salient traits in his personality. Idleness, procrastination and dilatoriness are foreign to his nature. His faith, his dynamism and his sense of mission do not allow him to fall into worry or melancholy, depression or despair, in which ordinary mortals usually seek refuge. In ceaseless activity, he is in his native element. If his energy is blocked by the environment, it turns upon itself and prompts thoughts of a fast. Intense dynamism joined to righteous indignation at evil generates a certain impatience which all his self-control fails to conceal. But his non-violence inhibits reprimand, animosity hatred, or violence, humanitarianism rules out the idea of retirement from

the world. The pent-up energy finds an outlet in fasting as the only form of asceticism that is compatible with a life of active service of humanity.

IX

HUMILITY

THIS trend of feeling is also fostered by humility, which in spite of his frank recognition of his own station and responsibility in public life, remains a characteristic of his inner life. Humility is the core of the spiritual life and sets the man towards infinite elevation of the psyche. It evokes ever-fresh attempts at purification and enlightenment, at sublimation and release of spiritual energy. As a form of tapa or penance, fasting is believed to release and enhance spiritual power. It is a well-known phenomenon that self-discipline as well as clearer thinking may be assisted by an occasional fast. And to it all a super-rational element, a habit of waiting for the divine call, promptings of the inner voice, a somewhat mystical institution, only in part a sudden culmination, in the form of a decision or solution, of a long course of conscious as well as unconscious thinking.

It will thus appear that fasts may be undertaken from a variety of motives—an urge for enlightenment, self-purification, sublimation or discipline, a sort of penance for one's own mistakes or those of others, a protest against wrong and evil, a desire to rouse the conscience of others and obedience to divine command. There is something almost unique in this conjunctive of reasons. The crux of the matter is that

the abstinence from food is only an outward manifestation of an inner endeavour of the spirit and an item in a philanthropic mission.

X

GANDHIJI'S FASTS

"AT a very early age," says Gandhi "I began fasting for self-purification and then I took a prolonged fast for an erring daughter of a very dear friend". The first public fast undertaken by the Mahatma was in South Africa in connection with the sufferings of the indentured labourers who had joined the Satyagraha struggle. His first fast in India was undertaken in 1918 in connection with the Ahmedabad mill workers' strike. After Gandhiji had fasted for three days, the millowners and workers came to a settlement. The next fast undertaken by the Mahatma was as a 'prayaschitta' for the Chauri Chaura tragedy of 1922. In September, 1924, after the Kohat riots, the Mahatma undertook a fast for 21 days at the house of the late Maulana Mohammed Ali "as an effective prayer both to Hindus and Muslims not to commit suicide". Then followed in 1922 a fast unto death as a protest against the Communal Award. The fast was broken on the 26th day with the signing of the Poona Pact. In the same year the Mahatma undertook a sympathetic fast with Apa Patwardhan whose request for doing scavenger's work in jail had been refused by the authorities. After two days of Gandhi's fast, the authorities granted the necessary permission. In May 1933, he undertook a fast of 21 days for the purification of self and associates. This was followed by a short fast in 1934 as

a penance for an assault on a Sanatanist by a social reformer. In 1939, the Mahatma commenced a fast unto death in connection with Rajkot happenings. The Viceroy's intervention led to a settlement and the termination of the fast. On the 10th February, 1943, Gandhiji, while a prisoner in the Aga Khan's Palace, undertook a fast for three weeks as the Government foisted on him the responsibility for the August disturbances.

The Mahatma was very greatly concerned about the situation in Bihar. He was in constant touch with Pandit Nehru and Congress leaders at Patna throughout the day over the trunk telephone.

Mahatma Gandhi said that there is no danger of Bihar mistaking his act for anything other than pure penance as a sacred duty.

He added "No friend should run to me for assistance or to show sympathy. I am surrounded by loving friends. It would be wholly wrong and irrelevant for any other person to copy me. No sympathetic fast or semi-fast is called for. Such action can only do harm. What my penance should do is to quicken the conscience of those who know me and believe in my 'bona-fides'".

Gandhiji concluded: "Let no one be anxious for me. I am, like all of us, in God's keeping. Nothing will happen to me so long as He wants service through the present tabernacle."

Gandhiji says that if the misconduct in Bihar continues all the Hindus of India will be condemned by the world. Bihari Hindus are in honour bound to regard the minority Muslims as their brethren, requir

ing protection equal with the vast majority of Hindus. "What you have done is to degrade yourselves and drag-down India".

"The innocent, unarmed and unresisting poor martyrs of Calcutta, Noakhali, Bombay and Bihar have not died in vain," continued Mr. Rahim. "Out of their senseless, inhuman sacrifice God has ordained that a new manly and sensible people shall be born in India, purged of the debasing rivalries and dehumanising enmities of 150 years of divided life and 35 years of communal power politics. Out of evil will come good, if the alternating butchery of one community in one place and another place teaches us the holy lesson of mutual goodwill, and Islamic tolerance." The British Viceroy admitted that the British Army in India is an army of occupation. Suppose we were occupied by a foreign army, suppose our political parties were suppressed, suppose all our political leaders were in jail and a foreign nation ruling us; wouldn't we seize upon any weapon to fight the foreign invader? Gandhi has no other weapon. In Gandhi's lowly hut there is one decoration. It is a simple print of Jesus Christ. He is not a Christian. He is a Hindu, but he believes in many of the principles of Christianity and the early Christians at least understood sacrifice and renunciation. Sacrifice and renunciation make a tremendous appeal to Indians and the British controvert their own statements of Gandhi's waning influence by the tremendous energy and money they spend in trying to prove that Gandhi's influence is waning. His fast had shaken India. The Viceroy had a Cabinet or executive council which consisted of fourteen members

—ten of them Indians. These were high placed Indians who were ready to collaborate with the British. In other words, independence didn't come first with them. Three of those ten Indians resigned on account of Gandhi's fast. I know one of them, Sir Homi Mody, knighted by the British King—a millionaire—a Parsi not of Gandhiji's religion, a hard-boiled business man. He resigned because of Gandhi's fast. You can imagine if men like Mody who were ready to co-operate with the British, if they feel that because of Gandhi's fast they can no longer serve the British you can imagine how the millions feel, the hundreds of millions who have abhorred the British all the time and refused to touch the British. The repercussions of Gandhi's fast, no matter how it ends, shakes Asia.

XI

OUR SOCIETY TO-DAY

OUR society to-day is riddled with many maladjustments, between the rich and the poor, between the rulers and the ruled, between the exploiters and the exploited, between men and women. Gandhiji stands for a harmonious social existence and for that reason stands for a proper adjustment of sex relationships. Though bound by tradition he, like Christ in the Temple of Jerusalem, grips the broom to sweep the place—India's vast continent—of unclean things—degradation of women, misuse of women, treatment of women as the object of man's lust.

"If I was born a woman, I would rise in rebellion against any pretension on the part of man that

woman is born to be his plaything", he writes. "To call woman the weaker sex", he adds, "is a libel; it is man's injustice to woman. . . . If non-violence is the law of our being, then future is with woman". "Woman, I hold, is the personification of self-sacrifice. The world shall see wonder and glory when woman has secured an equal opportunity for herself with man." Gandhiji is "uncompromising in the matter of woman's rights". "In my opinion", he says, "she should labour under no legal disability not suffered by men. I should treat the daughters and sons on a footing of perfect equality." He believes in the proper education of women who are to be the complement of men. "Women have got to come up to the level of men", he warns. "The economic and the moral salvation of India rests mainly with them. The future of India lies on their knees, for they will mature the future generation." He condemns Hindu culture by saying: "It has erred on the side of excessive subordination of the wife to the husband." But in his opinion it is degrading both for man and woman that women should be called upon or induced to forsake the hearth, and shoulder the rifle for the protection of that hearth. "The sin will be on man's head for tempting or compelling his companion to desert her special calling. There is as much bravery in keeping one's home in good order and condition, as there is in defending it against attack from without."

Yet Gandhiji helped women in extricating themselves from the domestic morass. He made them the instrument of national fulfilment. Their mission went beyond their old domestic frontiers, even be-

yond the national ones. Mahatma Gandhi's clarion call was: "In this non-violent warfare, women your contribution should be much greater than men's". The ancient wall of tradition crumbled as did once the walls of Jericho. In his own life, two of the most intimate influences were those of women, that of his mother and his wife. He considers women as the ballast which gives weightage and stability to his work as well as the national work. He really believes in the uplift of women though his voice in support of the Hindu Code was somewhat feeble.

He has traced the history of the rights of women and shown how they figured badly in Hindu religion. He quotes Smriti and other Hindu scriptures. He condemns child-marriage, marriage by purchase, and the ways of the modern girl and explains at length the marriage ideal, the relationship between husband and wife, parents and child, the domestic difficulties, and the way out and advocates widow re-marriage, removal of Purdah system and uplift of "fallen unfortunate sisters". He tells men that Swaraj shall only come through women and tells women that they have a duty to perform towards society for its happy growth. It is interesting to read Gandhiji's chapters on the place of women in society, spinning wheel and women, curse of drink, plain talk to women. This conglomeration of different articles written by him in the *Harijan* and elsewhere is indeed highly educative and useful.

His approach to women is both philosophical and psychological. He gives them a special place in India's

struggle for independence and in India's social life. Here or there he talks in a strain which will not be liked by a modern mind. But he talks courageously. He never lets tradition, by which he is bound, become an impediment. His philosophy is rooted in some basic concept—his life's ideal. If with that angle of vision this book is read one will find it highly entertaining. Women, as men, will surely benefit by its study and be in a position to assess his contribution to their welfare and uplift. He has brought them all to the very gates of liberty. He has given the courage to open them if they are not opened.

XII

HINDUS AND HARIJANS

At the end of the prayer, he asked how many Harijans were present in the hall. Not a hand went up. It was a great disappointment for him. He had come to live in Harijan quarters because he had become a "Bhangi". But not even one Harijan was there.

"I blame you and not those who are absent," he said, addressing the gathering. "The reason for their absence is that the so-called caste Hindus have kept down the so-called untouchables for ages and that too in the name of religion. This hall is meant for the use of Harijans. Non-Harijans can come only by grace. Those who come here should make it a point in bringing at least one Harijan each. If they befriend the Harijans, untouchability would disappear in the twinkling of an eye."

But he was grieved to find that they had not really done so. There were Harijan barristers and lawyers. Even today they could not live in the bungalows on Malabar Hill. There was a Harijan volunteer girl working in his camp. She was studying in B.A. There was nothing in her appearance to distinguish her from other girls. Why should the knowledge that she is a Harijan make her different from other girls, he asked.

XIII

BHANGIS AND BRAHMINS

MAHATMA GANDHI, in a signed article in "Harijan" deals with his recent tour of Madras province, his reactions to vast crowds of people that had gathered to his prayer meetings, the untouchability that existed among the people and his feelings when he visited places of pilgrimage.

"A Brahmin is he who knows Brahma," observed Mahatma Gandhi. "It is character and not occupation that determines the man. The Bhangi is or should be on a par with the Brahmin in all social relations." He would be happy to see, Mahatma Gandhi adds, the day when a Bhangi working as such is in the presidential chair which Maulana Abul Kalam Azad occupies with distinction.

Mahatma Gandhi likens the different sections of Society to various branches of the same tree and states that when untouchability is rooted out these distinctions will vanish and no one will consider superior himself to any other.

After pointing out why in the beginning he refused to negotiate the flight of over six hundred steps on a chair with crowds of people insisting to accompany him up the hill to take "Darshan" of the image, Mahatma Gandhi explained his idea of worshipping. He frankly admits that he does not regard that those images had any potency whilst Harijans were prohibited from entering temples. He had passed the famous Minakshi temple of Madura more than once before and never cared to go inside it whilst this prohibition against Harijans lasted. He was confident that his prayer at the foot of the hill, would be heard more than that of some devotees in the temple.

Mahatma Gandhi, however, wanted to respect the feelings of the people. He says that they would not understand this message and they might feel that some calamity would descend upon the country if he could not go up the hill. Mahatma Gandhi then tells how the crowd did not join him and how he succeeded in negotiating the hill.

In conclusion Mahatma Gandhi thanks the South Indian Railways, and the staff for their considering, no trouble too great for making his journey as little tiresome as possible.

XIV

HINDU TEA AND MUSLIM TEA

HINDU and Mussalman tea is sold at railway stations. Separate arrangements for meals for the two communities are sometimes made and none seem to be there for Harijans. All this is a sign of our

pitiable condition and constitutes a blot on British administration. One can understand their not interfering in religious matters but for them to allow separate arrangements for tea, water, etc., for the two communities is to set the seal of approval on separatism. Railways and railway travelling offer a golden opportunity which could be used for social reform and for educating the Public in sanitation and hygiene, good manners and communal unity. Instead, however, an utter neglect of and indifference to these desiderata are shown. Railway travel serves to strengthen rather than mitigate evil customs and bad habits.

XV UPPER CLASSES AND THE THIRD CLASS

FIRST and second class passengers are pampered, luxurious habits encouraged. Third class passengers on whom the railway revenues largely depend are denied even elementary amenities and exposed to all kinds of hardship. In either case weakness is exploited. And when, in addition to this, separatism and untouchability are recognized by the Railway authorities, it is the very limit. If any passenger wishes to impose restrictions on himself he is at liberty to do so at his own expense and suffer, may be, even hunger and thirst. But let him not demand special facilities for himself from Railway authorities.

That vegetarians and non-vegetarians should be catered for is another matter. That is already being done.

XVI INDIANS AND CHRISTIANS

A Roman Catholic student from Goa had the

sad experience of being told by some of his fellow students in Bombay, that he was a Portuguese and, therefore, a foreigner. When he told them that the Roman Catholics of Goa had castes just like the Hindus, he was not believed.

These transitory lapses will take place whilst we are shedding our narrowness and claiming all to be free Indians, slaves neither of the British, nor of the Portuguese, nor any other foreign rule. If the same students were wisely handled, they would be proud to know their friends as an Indian and not as a Goan, and be known themselves as Indian, not Bombayites. Everyone's religion is his own concern, but his nationality is a corporate thing, carrying with it important and far-reaching consequences. That even among converts there are castes is a reflection upon Hinduism and should set every Hindu thinking and make him become, with me, a Bhangi.

XVII

ENGLISH AND HINDUSTANI

UNDER the caption "English into Hindustani," Mahatma Gandhi writes in "Harijan":—

"What English knowing Indian has not felt the shame and sorrow of his failure to discover an equivalent for an English word in either his mother-tongue or the national language?

A Gujarati lad has an English-Gujarati dictionary in such a case to help him. Similarly an Urdu or Hindi knowing lad has his dictionary to fall back upon, but for Hindustani, which is neither Per-

sianized Urdu nor Sanskritized Hindi and which is the tongue of the common folk of the north, whether Hindu or Mussalman, a writer has no dictionary to fall back upon.

An attempt will be made through a column, at least, of the "Harijan" each week to furnish for English a Hindustani word or two, spelt in both Nagri and Urdu script. An endeavour will be made to give the names of those who will contribute their labour to this fascinating task. This is a pioneer work, and therefore, will, like all pioneer work, have defects. Those who detect them will confer a favour by drawing the attention to them of the Editor. I would suggest to the students that they copy out these words, week by week, in a note-book and add to or amend the attempt. They will find that the labour will combine recreation with instruction.

Only those English words which are in common use have been selected from a standard English dictionary. In reading the following, the reader should also know that no claim is made that the equivalents are the best possible or that they are exhaustive. They are a help to the searcher. The plan for the week is that those who are helping me to conduct the "Harijan" have prepared the first list. Kaka Saheb and Acharya Shri Man Narayan looked at the selection. The first letters of their names "Ka" or "Shri" have been given in parenthesis after the addition.

XVIII

URDU AND HINDI

ADDRESSING a gathering of various Harijan Welfare Associations in Madras at the Harijan Industries

School, Kodambakkara this afternoon Mahatma Gandhi recalled that Swami Vivekanda never observed that distinction between one caste and another and that he preached the abandonment of these distinctions.

Gandhiji stated that Swami Vivekanda has also advocated the learning of Sanskrit. "I would say this is good advice," said Mahatma Gandhi and added: "Speaking in the Sanskrit language and in fact pronouncing Sanskrit words definitely raises a man to a higher standard. So you must learn Sanskrit."

"But it is a very difficult affair. You must have several facilities. But you have no time to learn Sanskrit. Hence Hindustani which is derived from Sanskrit should be learnt. This will help in eradicating differences between one caste and another."

"We are to-day certain that the British raj cannot remain in for ever. They say and we believe that it will go even this year. Then there can be no national language for us other than Hindustani," observed Mahatma Gandhi in another article in "Harijan".

Mahatma Gandhi adds: "To-day there are two forms of this language. Hindi and Urdu, the former written in Nagri and the latter in Urdu script. One is fed by Sanskrit, the other by Persian and Arabic. To-day, therefore, both must remain. But Hindustani will be a mixture of these. What shape it will take in the future none can say nor need we know. Twenty-three crores out of thirty speak Hindustani. This number must have increased with the population. Obviously in this lies the national language."

Speaking about Hindi-Urdu controversy, Mahatma Gandhi says: "There ought to be no quarrel between the two sisters Hindi and Urdu. The rivalry is with English. This struggle itself means much labour. The rise of Hindustani will also be given an impetus by the provincial languages because it is the language of the masses, not of a handful of officials."

Mahatma Gandhi refers to his tour of Madras province and observes that a good deal has been done in the South but much still remains if we have to reach the desired goal.

XIX

GOD IS ONE

WHO can name Him, and knowing what he says
 Say, "I believe in Him?" And who can feel,
 And, with self-violence, to conscious wrong,
 Hardening his heart, say "I believe Him not?"
 The All-embracing, All-sustaining One,
 Say, does He not embrace, sustain, include,
 Thee?—Me—Himself? Bends not the sky above?
 And earth, on which we are, is it not firm?
 And over us, with constant kindly smile,
 The sleepless stars keep everlasting watch?
 Am I not here gazing into thine eyes?
 And does not All, that is,
 —Seen and unseen—mysterious all—
 Around thee, and within,
 Untiring agency,
 Press on thy heart and mind?
 —Fill thy whole heart with it—and, when thou art
 Lost in the consciousness of happiness,
 Then call it what thou wilt.

Happiness?—Heart?—Love?—God?
I have no name for it?
Feeling is all in all?
Name is but sound and rack
A mist around the glow of Heaven.

—Goethe's *Faust*.

CHAPTER VII

How Gandhi Solves India's Problems

*A beggar to the grave-yard hied
And there "Friend corpse, arise" he cried ;
"One moment lift my heavy weight
Of poverty; for I of late
Grow weary, and desire instead
Your comfort; you are good and dead."
The corpse was silent. He was sure
'Twas better to be dead than poor.*

—A SANSKRIT LYRIC

[Translated from the Panchatantra by A. W. Ryder.]

MAHATMA GANDHI fully knows that the burning problem of India is her poverty. And for that he wants the masses to develop village economy. The problem of men must be solved by men. He does not want the machines to tackle our difficulties for the simple reason that ere long we will have to tackle the difficulties of the machines. Gandhiji does not want to save the present at the cost of future generations.

I

THE CONSTRUCTIVE WORKERS CONFERENCE

On the 29th of January Gandhiji was asked a few questions in the Constructive Workers' Con-

ference at Madras. Two of those questions and their answers are given below :

Q. Can a worker who has taken up one item of constructive work dabble in others? Is it right for him to do so? If so how?

A. Constructive programme as it stands to-day is comprised of 18 items. The spinning wheel as the symbol of non-violence occupies the central place. So every worker must spin and know all about spinning. Supposing a worker takes up paper-making as his main occupation and has to find his livelihood also through it, he won't have much time left for other things. But he will be able to render some other service to the villagers besides that which he renders through the spinning-wheel and paper-making. For instance, he can work for improving the sanitation of the place and render advice about the care of the sick when he cannot take up full responsibility for nursing them.

Supposing another worker decides to concentrate on the spinning wheel only and to find his livelihood also through that, he can do so. I have no doubt in my mind that the wheel can serve as the instrument of earning one's livelihood and at the same time enable the worker to render useful service to his neighbours. The thing is that every worker should decide for himself what will be his main activity besides the spinning wheel and what will be his subsidiary activities. Whatever he does, he should do intelligently and with knowledge. Thus, in order to ply the wheel intelligently, he should know all the processes that precede and succeed spinning. He

should have full knowledge of the activities that he wishes to concentrate upon and have a general working knowledge about other items of the constructive programme. A student of astronomy cannot know astronomy without some knowledge of science in general. Similarly a worker cannot afford to be utterly ignorant about other items of constructive work.

Q. Please explain the meaning of Samagra Gramaseva of your conception. How can we fit ourselves for that?

A. The 18-fold Constructive Programme includes Samagra Gramaseva. A Samagra Gramasev must know everybody living in the village and render them such service as he can. That does not mean that the worker will be able to do everything single-handed. He will show them the way of helping themselves and procure for them such help and materials as they require. He will train up his own helpers. He will so win over the villagers that they will seek and follow his advice. Supposing I go and settle down in a village with a *ghani* (village oil press), I won't be an ordinary *ghanchi* (oil presser) earning 15—20 rupees a month. I will be a Mahatma *ghanchi*. I have used the word 'Mahatma' in fun but what I mean to say is that as a *ghanchi* I will become a model for the villagers to follow. I will be a *ghanchi* who knows the Gita and the Quran. I will be learned enough to teach their children. I may not be able to do so for lack of time. The villagers will come to me and ask me: "Please make arrangements for our children's education." I will tell them: "I can find you a

you will have to bear the expenses." And they will be prepared to do so most willingly. I will teach them spinning and when they come and ask me for the services of a weaver, I will find them a weaver on the same terms as I found them a teacher. And the weaver will teach them how to weave their own cloth. I will inculcate in them the importance of hygiene and sanitation and when they come and ask me for a sweeper I will tell them: "I will be your sweeper and I will rain you all in the job." This is my conception of Samagra Gramaseva. You may tell me that I will never find a *ghanchi* of this description in this age. Then I will say that we cannot hope to improve our villages in this age. Take the example of a *ghanchi* in Russia. After all the man who runs an oil mill is a *ghanchi*. He has money but his strength does not lie in his money. Real strength lies in knowledge. True knowledge gives a moral standing and moral strength. Everyone seeks the advice of such a man. Take the instance of Vinoba. He is a good *ghanchi*. You all know what he does and you can all follow his example according to your capacity.

II

THE SPINNING WHEEL

GANDHI rightly points out that the real poverty of India can only be seen in the villages. The towns live on the rural districts and do not draw their wealth from foreign nations, but live on the proceeds of the robbery which has for two hundred years been perpetrated on the national wealth of India by foreign industry. "Of the money paid for foreign materials," Gandhi said once in conversation, "only two annas fall

to the workers and six or seven to the capitalists. Anyone, however, who buys hand-woven Indian material pays his money direct to the poor weavers and spinners; not a penny of it goes into the pockets of the capitalists."

Gandhi then proceeded to work out his great programme: India must boycott foreign material and re-introduce the spinning-wheel. "I claim that in losing the spinning-wheel, we lost our left lung. We are, therefore, suffering from galloping consumption. The restoration of the spinning-wheel arrests the progress of the fell disease." The Mahatma showed how the universal use of hand-woven Indian material, and the complete boycott of imported textile goods, would of itself mean the distribution of six hundred million rupees a year among the Indian people, who would in this way gradually come into possession of their strength and flourish again. Only through the spinning-wheel could India prove to the world that she was determined to make herself completely independent; only by means of the coarse hand-woven khaddar cloth could India be freed from slavery; the spinning-wheel was the only cure for poverty.

III

FOREIGN IMPORTS

GANDHI also drew attention to the fact that the use of factory goods is sinful because these are produced at starvation wages. Among the vows which each of Gandhi's followers has to take is also included one forbidding the use of anything which involves any sort of cheating. In Gandhi's view this command by

itself is enough to make the use of foreign cloth impossible, for it is, according to him, the product of exploitation and poverty, manufactured at the expense of the European proletariat, who are cheated of the fruit of their labour.

So Gandhi demanded that materials imported from abroad should not only be rejected, but destroyed, given to the flames. Through this burning of cloth, the sins connected with it were to be symbolically destroyed: "If we are satisfied that we erred in making use of foreign cloth, that we have done an immense injury to India, that we have all but destroyed the race of weavers, cloth stained with such sin is only fit to be burned".

IV

ETHICS OF DESTRUCTION

GANDHI regards the destruction of foreign materials as the quickest method of encouraging the home-woven khaddar. When he was reproached by many important men, Rabindranath Tagore for example, or his best friend, C. F. Andrews, who frankly declared that they could not understand what advantage it could be to the nation to burn valuable materials. Gandhi in justification developed his "ethics of destruction". This answer, perhaps more than any other utterance of the Mahatma, reveals to us his peculiar and profound realm of thought. First he protested against the assumption that the burning of cloth was an expression of feelings of hostility towards England. "The idea of burning foreign materials springs not from hate, but from repentance of our past sins... In burning

foreign cloths we are burning our taste for foreigner fineries . . . The motive was to punish ourselves and not the foreigner. Thus the boycott and burning of foreign textiles has nothing to do with racehatred of England. India cherishes no such hate and does not even feel it."

When Rabindranath Tagore and many others reproached Gandhi for not having distributed the valuable materials among the poor instead of burning them, he replied to this apparently humane counsel in words which again reveal his deep social and religious feeling: "I must refuse to insult the naked by giving them clothes they do not need instead of giving them the work they sorely need. . . . The ill-clad or the naked millions of India need no charity, but work. Have not the poor any feeling of self-respect and patriotism? Is the gospel of Swadeshi only for the well-to-do?"

Gandhi's championing of the spinning-wheel and; in particular, the burning of foreign materials at his instigation, gave rise, as already mentioned, to almost universal opposition. Even men who, like Romain Rolland, held up to admiration the personality and influence of the Mahatma, could not refrain from criticizing him gently on this point

V

THE REVOLUTIONARY JERK

IF one compares Gandhi's procedure with Lenin's attempt to transform in a night an agricultural country, in which industry was but slightly developed, into an industrial state of the most modern kind, Gandhi's

ideas suddenly appear, in quite a different light. Although he himself never gave concrete form to this idea, it nevertheless appears that Gandhi through his emotions had a more correct understanding of the economic laws of Marxism than Lenin, in refusing to try to industrialize India by artificial means. If, as has already been pointed out, Lenin's "revolutionary jerk," his attempt to try to jump over a whole epoch in the economic development of his country, must be called an emanation of romantic optimism, Gandhi, on the contrary, by his advocacy of mediaeval home industry, which at first blush sounds romantic, proved himself the more sober practical politician.

"The Occidental," says Braunthal "may call it the attempt of a petit bourgeois reactionary, and it even appears as such if objectively regarded from a more advanced historical stage; but if it is looked at from the angle of the peculiar historical development and the social and economic conditions of India, this rebellion against capitalism assume greater revolutionary significance, than, say, the rebellion of the Luddites against machinery. Luddism was without doubt an aberration in the class war of the proletariat, but it was an inevitable and to some extent necessary aberration, which was overcome by the modern knowledge of the nature of machinery which increased simultaneously with the rapid development of capitalism and the quick absorption of superfluous labour. ... It requires time and experience before the worker learns to distinguish between machinery and its capitalist employment and to transfer his attacks from the material means of production to the form of exploitation by society".

"The hatred of machinery," says Braunthal, "the hatred of capitalism, which burns so strongly in Gandhi, is the reflection of the hate of millions of Indian peasants and handworkers, whose traditional basis of existence was completely destroyed by capitalism and who were excluded from the possibility of existence on a capitalist basis as a factory proletariat. It is the cry of the Luddites which wrings Gandhi's breast, when he condemns capitalism, the capitalist age, and modern civilization as a monstrous depravity, a black age of darkness....."

VI

MAHATMA AND MACHINES

IN a conversation with Ramahandran, Tagore's disciple, on Ramahandran's asking him whether he opposed all machinery in principle, Gandhi replied: "How could that be possible? I know that my own body is nothing but an extraordinary delicately constructed machine. The spinning-wheel is also a machine, and so is every toothpick even. I am not fighting machinery as such, but the madness of thinking that machinery saves labour. Men 'save labour' until thousands of them are without work and die of hunger on the streets. I want to secure employment and livelihood not only to part of the human race, but for all, I will not have the enrichment of a few at the expense of the community. At present the machine is helping a small minority to live on the exploitation of the masses. The motive force of this minority is not humanity and love of their kind, but greed and avarice. This state of things I am attacking with all my might."

For Gandhi the human being remains the only thing of importance: "Machinery must not strive to cripple and stunt human limbs. It must one day cease at last to be a mere tool of acquisitiveness: then the workers will no longer be overstrained and the machine will be a blessing instead of a danger. I am aiming at a change in working conditions of such a kind that the mad race for money will come to an end, and the worker will not only be adequately paid but will also find work which is something more than mere slavery. On those conditions machinery might be as useful for the men and women who work it as for the State which possesses it. Once the mad race has ceased the worker will also be able to lead a free life under fitting conditions."

Gandhi, therefore, rejects machinery only because, instead of saving the work of the individual and alleviating conditions of life for the community, it is now useful only to a minority of rich men, and inflicts infinite harm on the working masses. And as in Gandhi's eyes benefit or injury to the masses, to the poor and needy, is the sole criterion for judging every institution, this recognition of the fatal effect of industrialism on the masses leads him to reject machinery.

For the same reasons Gandhi is opposed to railways, electric, tramways, and all modern means of transport; in his opinion these do not satisfy any genuine need: "What is the good of covering great stretches of ground at high speed?" he asked. "All these things only seem necessary to the European because he is caught in the snares of modern civiliza-

tion. Machinery is like a snake-hole which may contain from one to a hundred snakes. Where there is machinery, there are large cities, and where there are large cities there are tramcars and railways, and there only does one see electric light."

VII

CONTRARY TO DESTINY

All these means of transport seem to Gandhi to be contrary to the original destiny of the human race: "Man is so made by nature as to require him to restrict his movements as far as his hands and feet will take him. If we did not rush about from place to place by means of railways and such other maddening conveniences, much of the confusion that arises would be obviated. Our difficulties are of our own creation. God gifted man with intellect so that he might know his Maker. Man abused it so that he might forget his Maker. Man is so constructed that he can only help his immediate neighbours; but in his conceit he pretends to have discovered that he must with his body serve every individual in the universe. Thus man is utterly confounded. Railways are a most dangerous institution. Man by their means is getting farther and farther away from his Maker."

VIII

THE GOD OF MAMMON

IN Gandhi's view the Western nations are groaning under compulsory labour for the new god, materialism, which stunts their moral growth; Europe no longer worships any god but Mammon and measures its so-called progress in pounds, shillings and

pence. Gandhi tried to show in a wide historical survey how nationalistic cultures had always led to the ruin of great nations; he cites Rome, Egypt and, lastly, the present age and the world war. "The world war has shown, as nothing else has, the satanic nature that dominates Europe to-day. Every canon of public morality has been broken by the victors in the name of virtue. No lie has been considered too foul to be uttered. But the cause of all these crimes is crass materialism."

This rejection of the democratic form of government is also found in Tolstoi: "To ask me for my opinion on parliamentarianism," he said once to his disciple Semeonov, "is like asking the Pope or a monk for advice on the regulation of prostitution. Herzen believed that if men would only devote a hundredth part of the energy wasted on political revolutions to the perfecting of their own nature, they could reach incomparably greater heights. Everything depends on the world's not turning away from the laws of God".

IX

SATANIC CIVILIZATION

GANDHI has also expressed himself as most decidedly opposed to the law courts; he regards this institution as an instrument of foreign rule forced on the Indians, a contrivance of "satanic civilization". In the same way he opposed lawyers, being convinced that courts and lawyers merely bring confusion into the life of the people, increase disputes, and complicate the relations between man and man.

X

BLACK MAGIC

GANDHI rejects with special vehemence the profession of medicine and the institution of hospitals; he has devoted a special bulky work to this subject, a book which is bound to amaze the European reader. In it he declares that "medical science is the concentrated essence of black magic. Quackery is infinitely preferable to what passes for high medical skill". He regards hospitals as institutions of the devil and the taking of medicine as the greatest sin a man can commit. In his *Guide to Health* he states on this subject :

"We labour under the fatal delusion that no disease can be cured without medicine. This has been responsible for more mischief to mankind than any other evil. It is of course necessary that our diseases should be cured, but they cannot be cured by medicine. Not only are medicines merely useless, but at times even positively harmful. For a diseased man to take drugs and medicines would be as foolish as to try to cover up the filth that has accumulated in the inside of a house. Illness or disease is only Nature's warning that filth has accumulated in some portion or other of the body, and it would surely be the part of wisdom to allow Nature to remove the filth instead of covering it up with the help of medicines. Those who take medicines are really rendering the task of Nature doubly difficult."

"Gandhi wants to cure all ailments by spiritual means. His most bitter reproach against Western

medicine is that it occupies itself exclusively with the body and completely neglects the soul. "I would urge the students and professors," he said once in the course of an address, "to investigate the laws governing the health of the spirit, and they will find that they will yield startling results even with reference to the cure of the body. The man who lives in the proper spirit need never get ill. But because modern medical science entirely ignores this permanent spiritual element, its activities are too restricted to achieve real and permanent success".

Here, too, Gandhi's views are in touch with those of Tolstoi. Tolstoi's hitherto unpublished diaries contain "Thoughts on medicine and doctors," which are strikingly in line with Gandhi's expressed views.

"It is a curious thing," remarks Tolstoi, in these diaries, "that such necessary and beautiful things as bread, fruit, glass, and iron cost so little, while men pay untold sums for the quite unnecessary and often even harmful activities of lawyers and doctors..... The art of healing as practised to-day hardly does more good than harm or rather the other way about.... The sick man does not know that his life depends on spiritual conditions which are not subject to the laws of matter; instead of seeking for help in the spiritual source of the world and the soul, he prefers to seek it in a living man, a wonder worker, prophet, or doctor..... To-day the peculiar but very widespread idea prevails that medicine is useful to life and that its practice is in itself a good work. No such thing exists as good works, there are only good intentions. You can lessen

human suffering and be of service to life in a thousand ways, even without medicine.

XI.

FOREIGN CULTURE

"MY uncompromising opposition to English as the medium of education has resulted in an unwarranted charge being levelled against me of being hostile to foreign culture or the learning of the English language. No reader of *Young India* could have missed the statement often made by me in these pages that I regard English as the language of international commerce and diplomacy, and, therefore, consider its knowledge on the part of some of us essential. As it contains some of the richest treasures of thought and literature I would certainly encourage its careful study among those who have linguistic talents, and expect them to translate those treasures for the nation in its vernaculars."

"Nothing can be farther from my thoughts than that we should become exclusive and erect barriers. But I do respectfully contend that an appreciation of other cultures can fitly follow, never precede, an appreciation and assimilation of our own....."

Gandhi shows how India for thousands of years was the only country to maintain unshaken its wise traditions and institutions, while everything else in the world was transient. From quite primitive times India has been able to cultivate self-control and knowledge of happiness: "We have nothing to learn from the foreigner. The traditional old implements, the plough and the spinning-wheel, have made our wisdom and welfare. We must gradually return to the old

simplicity! Let everyone proceed to set a good example!"

XII

THE FAITH OF FATHERS

IN very beautiful, most arresting words, Gandhi confesses that he feels most profoundly drawn to the faith of his fathers, in spite of his clear insight into the many defects inherent in this creed: "I can no more describe my feeling for Hinduism than for my own wife. She moves me as no other woman in the world can. Not that she has no faults. I dare say she has many more than I see myself. But the feeling of an indissoluble bond is there. Even so I feel for and about Hinduism with all its faults and limitations. Nothing elates me so much as the music of the Gita or the Ramayana of Tulsidas, the two books of Hinduism I may be said to know. When I fancied I was taking my lastt breath, the Gita was my solace. I know the vice tha is going on to-day in all the Indian shrines, but I love them in spite of their unspeakable failings. I am a reformer through and through. But my zeal never takes me to the rejection of any of the essential things of Hinduism....."

XIII

FOOD AND FREEDOM

"FAMINE in India is not a calamity descended upon us by Nature, but is a calamity created by the rulers. It cannot be explained away by raising the bogey of increasing birth-rate or other such things," says Mahatma Gandhi in an article, in "Harijan," under the caption "Famine and Birth-rate".

Mahatma Gandhi writes: "Major General Sir John McGaw, President, India Office Medical Board, is reported by a correspondent to have said: 'Famines in India will recur; in fact' India is to-day facing perpetual famine. Unless something is done to decrease the birth-rate in India, the country will be heading straight for a calamity'.

"The correspondent asks what I have to say on this grave issue. For me this and some other ways of explaining away famines in India are to divert the attention from the only cause of recurring famines in this benighted land. I have stated, and repeat here that famines of India are not a calamity descended upon us from Nature, but a calamity created by the rulers—whether through ignorance, indifference, or whether consciously or otherwise does not matter. Prevention against drought is not beyond human effort and ingenuity. Such effort has not proved ineffective in other countries. In India a sustained intelligent effort has never been made.

"The bogey of increasing birth-rate is not a new thing. It has been often trotted out. Increase in population is not and ought not to be regarded as a calamity to be avoided. Its regulation or restriction by artificial methods is a calamity of the first grade, whether universal which thank God, it is never likely to be. Pestilence, wars and famines are cursed antidotes against cursed lust which is responsible for unwanted children. If we would avoid this threefold curse, we would avoid too the curse of unwanted children by the sovereign remedy of self-control. The

evil consequences of artificial methods are being seen by discerning men even now.

"Without, however encroaching upon the moral domain, let me say that propagation of the race rabbit-wise must undoubtedly be stopped, but not so as to bring greater evil in its train. It should be stopped by methods which in themselves ennoble the race. In other words, it is all a matter of proper education which would embrace every department of life and dealing with one course, will take in its orbit all the others. A way is not to be avoided because it is upward and therefore uphill. Man's upward progress necessarily means ever-increasing difficulty which is to be welcomed.

A friend writes:—

"The food famine situation in Mysore and Rayalseema is daily growing more serious. Unless imports pour in in sufficient quantities, the local co-operative stores will fail to supply rations—starvation rations as they are, since only eight oz of rice is being given to peasants who need 24 oz to keep them fit—to the peasant masses, and I am afraid that we may have to be prepared to face deaths, due to starvation in November and December."

If even half of what he says is true, it is a sad reflection on our capacity to cope with food famine in a vast country like India where there is land-lying waste or ill-used and water running rapidly into the sea for want of human ingenuity to dam and store it. The writer says that "unless imports pour in in sufficient quantities," meaning undoubtedly that they come from outside India, mass-deaths due to starvation in

November and December "are a certainty". I suggest to everyone concerned that if this happens, the Government of the country will be guilty of mass-murder.

To look to outside sources for food supply is to invite starvation. Has it ever been made clear that India has no capacity, for growing sufficient food between now and November? Need a vast country like India with its teeming millions starve, even if the whole world were to declare a blockade against it?

A friend has sent me an extract from "Current Science," showing how mango seed kernel is a fair substitute for cereals and fodder :—

"According to a recent estimate, the concentrates available in India are sufficient only for 29.1 per cent and fodder for 78.5 per cent of adult bovine population. This does not take into account the requirements of goats, sheep and equines. The shortage is further accentuated during periods of famine. In order to meet the shortages, the Nutritional Research Laboratory at Izat-Nagar have been exploring new sources of foodstuffs. This investigation relates to the use of mango seed kernel as a cattle and human food. At present the material is thrown away as a waste. From chemical analysis of kernels it has been found to be rich in carbohydrates and fats (crude protein 8 per cent either extract 8.85 per cent and soluble carbohydrates 74.49 per cent on dry basis).

"The observations credit mango seed kernel with a place in the category of foodgrains and make available every year about 70 million lbs. digestible protein and 780 million lbs. of starch equivalent from a hitherto unutilized source. It has been also calculated

that the digestible protein obtained from 80 lbs. of oats is equal to that of 100 lbs. of the kernel and the starch equivalent for 86 lbs."

I have known this use from my early youth. But no one seems to have thought of conserving this seed for food. The mango season is upon us and though much time has been lost, it will be a good thing if every mango seed was saved and the kernel baked and eaten in the place of cereals or given to those who need it. Every ounce of food saved is so much gained.

XIV

ESSENTIALS OF HEALTH

MAHATMA GANDHI, addressing prayer meeting, said that there was nothing to be ashamed of in repeating the name of God and in beating time with it. Modesty was an admirable virtue but out of place it became a fault.

Reverting next to the subject of the previous evening, i.e., nature cure, he spoke about pure water, the second in importance among the five natural elements, the first one being air, about which he had spoken two days before. Large numbers of men and women in this country drank impure water and washed their clothes with and bathed in water which made the body and the clothes dirtier than before. "Will any of you care to bathe or wash your clothes in the gutter water?" he asked. "Yet many of the small tanks, where people bathe and wash and even drink water from are no cleaner than the gutter. Nature is lenient. It often does not punish us for our sins immediately. Thus, we can go on breathing

impure air and drinking impure water over prolonged periods without any dramatic ill-effects. But there is not the slightest doubt that such a thing lowers the vitality and makes one fall an easy prey to disease."

He used to find it difficult to bathe at Har-ki-Pauri if he was at all late. People evacuated on the banks and did not even care to cover it up with sand. They made the Bathing Ghat filthy, strewing flowers which were trampled under the feet and so on. It was a painful state of affairs, a thing of which Indians had real cause to be ashamed of.

He had taken up, said the Mahatma, the new job of advising people on nature cure. A doctor had to go through five years of hard studies before he could begin to treat patients. Not so with the nature cure man.

Speaking about himself, he said he had picked up the essentials of nature cure by reading a few books and talking to experts in the line. Experience and experimentation had made up the rest. They would all do the same and become their own doctors. People had a notion that what was simple was no good. A spinning wheel was simple. It was, therefore, condemned as primitive, as crude. A mill cost a lot and was elaborate. It was an indication of progress. If this was their view, he was afraid they would have no use for him as he was but a simple-minded villager and a believer in the philosophy of simplicity.

But he knew that most of them were simple-minded men and women like him and, though they lived in a city, they had not lost all contact with the

villages. Therefore, he felt emboldened to place nature cure before them. Pure air and pure water were the first essentials and, of course, Ram Nam was there all the time. A man who repeated Ram Nam and thereby cleansed his inner being could not tolerate the filth outside. If millions took to Ram Nam in real earnest, there would be no riots, which were a social malady, and there would be no illnesses. The kingdom of heaven would come on earth.

XV

NATURE CURE IN INDIA

"IT is plain to me as it has become to some of my friends that I am incorrigible. I can learn only by my mistakes, I have just discovered myself making a mistake which I should never have made.

"I have known Dr. Dinshah Mehta for a long time. He has dedicated his life solely to nature cure of his conception. His one ambition is to see a full-fledged nature cure university established in India. A university worth the name must be predominantly for the prevention and cure of the diseases of the poor villagers of India. No such university exists in the world. The Institutes in the West are designed more for the rich than the poor.

"I feel that I know the method of nature cure for the villagers of India. Therefore, I should at once have known that nature cure for the villagers could not be attempted in Poona city. But a Trust was made. Very sober Jehangirji Patel permitted himself to be a co-trustee with Dr. Mehta and me and I hastened to Poona to run for the poor. Dr. Mehta's erstwhile

clinic which was designed for the rich. I suggested some drastic changes but last Monday the knowledge dawned upon me that I was a fool to think that I could ever hope to make an institute for the poor in a town. I realized that if I cared for the ailing poor I must go to them and not expect them to come to me. This is true of ordinary medicinal treatment. It is much more so of nature cure. How is a villager coming to Poona to understand and carry out my instructions to apply mud poultices, take sun cure, hip and friction sitz baths or certain foods cooked conservatively? He would expect me to give him a powder or a potion to swallow and be done with it. Nature cure connotes a way of life which has to be learnt; it is not a drug cure as we understand it. The treatment to be efficacious can, therefore, only take place in or near a man's cottage or house. It demands from its physician sympathy and patience and knowledge of human nature. When he has successfully practised in this manner, in a village, or villages, when enough men and women have understood the secret of nature cure, a nucleus for a nature cure university is founded. It should not have required eleven days' special stay in the Institute to discover this simple truth that I did not need a huge building and all its attendant paraphernalia for my purpose. I do not know whether to laugh or weep over my folly. I laughed at it and made haste to undo the blunder. This confession completes the reparation.

"I should like the reader to draw the moral that he should never take anything for gospel truth even if it comes from a *Mahatma* unless it appeals to both his head and heart. In the present case my folly is so

patent that even if it had continued for sometime very few, if any would have succumbed to it. The real villagers would not have come for relief to this Institute. But if the discovery had come too late it would have blasted my reputation for I would have lost in my own estimation. Nothing hurts a man more than the loss of self-respect. I do not know that now I deserve the confidence of my fellowmen. If I lose it I know that I shall have deserved the loss. To complete the story I must tell the reader that not a pice of the money earmarked for the poor ailing villagers has been spent on this abortive enterprise. What shape the present Institute will now take and where and how poor men's nature cure will be tried is no part of this confession. The result of the initial mistake must not, however, be an abandonment of the new pursuit that I have taken up in the so-called evening of my life. It must, on the contrary, be a clearer and more vigorous pursuit of the ideal of nature cure for the millions if such a thing is at all practicable. Possible it certainly is."

Poona, 6-3-46

XVI

THE CULT OF THE COW

THE love for all created beings also led Gandhi to include in his faith the Hinduist veneration for the cow. This demand of the Indian creed, which seems so strange to Europeans, receives a new and deep meaning in Gandhi: "The central fact of Hinduism is cow protection; cow protection to me is one of the most wonderful phenomena in human evolution. The cow to me means the entire sub-human world. Man through the cow is enjoined to realize his identity

with all that lives. Why the cow was selected for apotheosis is obvious to me. The cow was in India the best companion. She was the giver of plenty. Not only did she give milk, but she also made agriculture possible. The cow is a poem of pity. One reads pity in this gentle animal. Protection of the cow means the protection of the whole dumb creation of God. The appeal of the lower order of creation is all the more forcible because it is speechless. Cow protection is the gift of Hinduism to the world. And Hinduism will live as long as there are Hindus to protect the cow"

In his writings and speeches Gandhi frequently comes back to the protection of the cow. He believes that the moral quality of the Indian race will not be judged either by its capacity for reciting prayers, nor by the number of its pilgrimages, nor by its punctilious observance of the rules of caste, but solely by its ability to protect the cow.

XVII

LOVE FOR SNAKES

GANDHI'S love for all live nature extends to the lowest beasts, even to poisonous serpents. Although countless numbers are killed every year in India by snake-bites, the Mahatma preaches the practice of Ahimsa even against these dangerous reptiles: "Let us never forget that the serpents have been created by the same God who created us and all other creatures. God's ways are inscrutable, but we may rest assured that he did not create animals like the lion and the tiger, the serpent and the scorpion, in order to bring about the destruction of the human race.

"The great St. Francis of Assisi, who used to roam about the forests, was not hurt by the serpents or the wild beasts, nay, they even lived on terms of intimacy with him. So, too, thousands of yogis and fakirs live in the forests of Hindustan amidst lions—among tigers and serpents, but we never hear of their meeting death at the hands of these animals..... In fact, I have implicit faith in the doctrine that so long as man is not inimical to the other creatures, they will not be inimical to him. Love is the greatest of the attributes of man. Without it the worship of God would be an empty nothing. It is, in short, the root of all religions whatsoever."

XVIII

LIFE IN LONDON

DURING his life in London Gandhi met adherents of the most varied ideas and schools of thought; the bravery of many of these men made a deep impression on him, but he nevertheless always felt that violence and the various forms in which it might be used could be no cure for the maladies of India, and that the civilization of his country required for its protection another and more lofty weapon. This profound conviction of the universal truth in the Ahimsa idea made Gandhi decided to carry on the fight against personal and political enemies in all circumstances by means of love alone.

XIX

NEW TESTAMENT

IN his earliest youth strong impressions had established and confirmed in Gandhi faith in the truth

attention to this similarity between Gandhi and Tolstoi, and in his most excellent monograph of Gandhi, he expressly compares him with Tolstoi: "I have said enough to show Gandhi's great evangelical heart beating under the garb of his Hindu faith. He is a gentler, quieter Tolstoi, a Tolstoi who, if I may use the expression, is a natural Christian in the universal sense of the world. For Tolstoi was a Christian less by nature than by force of will".

XXI

TOLSTOI'S HUMBLE FOLLOWER

IN April 1910 Gandhi wrote to Tolstoi, and sent him his pamphlet, *Indian Home Rule*. In the accompanying letter Gandhi signed himself Tolstoi's "humble follower," and asked the novelist to tell him what he thought of the book.

Tolstoi first replied briefly to this request, and then in greater detail in a second letter. "The longer I live, and especially now, when I vividly feel the nearness of death, I want to tell others what I feel particularly clearly and what to my mind is of great importance—namely, that which is called passive resistance, but which is in reality nothing else than the teaching of love uncorrupted by false interpretations. That love—i.e., the striving for the union of human souls and the activity demanded from this striving—is the highest and only law of human life, and in the depths of his soul every human being (as we must clearly see in children) feels and knows this; he knows this until he is entangled by the false teachings of the world. This law was proclaimed by all—by the



GANDHI MEETS GANDHI

An impressive gathering of the Pathan Patriots at Peshawar organized under the inspiration of Khan Abdul Chaffar Khan during the historic visit of Mahatma Gandhi to Peshawar.

Indian as by the Chinese, Hebrew, Greek, and Roman sages of the world. I think this law was most clearly expressed by the Christ, who plainly said that 'in this only is all the law and the prophets'. But besides this, foreseeing the corruption to which this law is and may be subject, he straightway pointed out the danger of its corruption, which is natural to people who live in worldly interests.

"..... He knew, as every sensible man must know, that the use of force is incompatible with love as the fundamental law of life that as soon as violence is permitted, in whichever case it may be, the insufficiency of the law of love is acknowledged, and by this the very law is denied. The whole Christian civilization, so brilliant outwardly, grew up on this self-evident and strange misunderstanding and contradiction, sometimes conscious, but mostly unconscious.

"In reality, as soon as force was admitted into love, there was no more and there could be no love, as the law of life, and as there was no law of love, there was no law at all, except violence, i.e., the power of the strongest..... This contradiction always grew with the development of the people of the Christian world, and lately it reached the highest stage. The question now evidently stands thus: either to admit that we do not recognize any religious moral teaching, and we guide ourselves in arranging our lives only by the power of the stronger, or that all our compulsory taxes, courts, and police establishments, but mainly our armies, must be abolished...."

XXII

THEORIES IN PRACTICE

THESE doctrines of the apostle of Iasnaia Poliana, which had remained purely theoretical, were to be practically realized by Gandhi. In all the political speeches which Gandhi delivered in Ahmedabad, Bombay, or Calcutta, whether he was addressing the masses, students, women's organizations, or working men, in the midst of the gravest political confusion, surrounded by cheers and demonstrations, directly threatened with arrest, there rang always from his mouth such words as had never yet been heard from a politician since the beginning of the history of man.

An enslaved people was rising against their oppressors, prepared for revolution, and was striving to shake off the yoke of centuries; but the leader, the organizer of the movement for liberation, who called on the people to rise, preached love, understanding, and consideration for the enemy.

"Through love," says Gandhi, "we seek to conquer the wrath of the English administrators and their supporters. We must love them and pray to God that they might have wisdom to see what appears to us to be their error. It is our duty to let ourselves be slain, but not ourselves to slay. If we are cast into prison, we must acquiesce in our lot without bad feeling, hate, or any thought of revenge".

XXIII

LOVE YOUR ENEMY

HE states emphatically that India can only rise

to new freedom if she meets her oppressors with love, sires for their lives and even sacrifices her own rather than inflict pain on the enemy: "The moment of victory has come when there is no retort to the mad fury of the powerful, but a voluntary, dignified and quiet submission.... The secret of success lies, therefore, in holding every English life and the life of every officer serving the Government as sacred as those of our own dear ones. All the wonderful experience I have gained now during nearly forty years of conscious existence has convinced me that there is no gift so precious as that of life. I make bold to say that the moment the Englishmen feel that, although they are in India in a hopeless minority, their lives are protected against harm, not because of the matchless weapons of destruction which are at their disposal, but because Indians refuse to take the lives even of those whom they may consider to be utterly in the wrong..... we must by our honest conduct demonstrate to them that they are our kinsmen. We must, by our conduct, demonstrate to every Englishman that he is as safe in the remotest corner of India as he professes to be behind the machine-gun. That moment will see a transformation in the English nature in its relation to India and that moment will also be the moment when all the destructive cutlery in India will begin to rust..... As soon as a nation no longer fears violence, its Government will also see its uselessness and give it up"?

Gandhi's revolution is unique in history as a revolution of goodness and non-violence, under the leadership of a man who preaches understanding and sacrifice and whose motto is "Love your enemies."

It is true that in earlier times reformers, saints and founders of religions have preached passive resistance in face of evil, but what distinguishes Gandhi's movement from all those of the past is the fact that the Mahatma regards non-violence not as a religious and ethical precept for individuals or for a small community, but makes it the basis of a political movement, and thus for the first time in history has transformed a moral perception into a practical political system.

XXIV

REJECTION OF BOLSHEVISM

IT is, therefore, not surprising that Gandhi vigorously rejects the methods of Bolshevism. In spite of all the claims put forward to the effect that the liberation of the poor and oppressed can only be accomplished by a violent upheaval, Gandhi has never let himself be led astray in his views on this subject. "I believe in the conversion of humanity not in its destruction," he replied to the Indian Bolshevik. "I do not believe in the success of violent action; however much I sympathize with and admire deserving arguments I nevertheless remain an inflexible opponent of all violent methods in however good a cause they may be employed. The doctrine of force can never be brought into harmony with our own outlook. The faith of Bolshevism is ruthless self-indulgence, whereas Satyagraha means self-restraint."

XXV

RULES OF THE GAME

GANDHI has again and again set a good example

joyfully to accept all injustice for his righteous ideal. When he was threatened with arrest, he welcomed the news with joy, and instructed all his followers to submit unresistingly if they were taken prisoner:— "Anyone summoned to appear before a Court should do so. No defence should be offered and no pleaders engaged in the matter. If a fine is imposed with the alternative of imprisonment, imprisonment should be accepted. If only a fine is imposed, it ought not to be paid. There should be no demonstration of grief or otherwise made by the remaining Satyagrahis by reason of the arrest or imprisonment of their comrade. It cannot be too often repeated that we court imprisonment and may not complain of it when we actually receive it. When once imprisoned it is our duty to conform to all prison regulations. A Satyagrahi may not resort to surreptitious practices. All that the Satyagrahis do can only and must be done openly. To evade no punishment, to accept all suffering joyfully, and to regard it as a possibility for further strengthening his soul-force, is the duty of every single one of my followers."

XXVI

SPIRITUAL STRENGTH

WHEN Gandhi actually was put in prison he regarded this as a trial of his spiritual strength. "I calmly acquiesced in all the troubles bodily given to me by the warder," he wrote of his time in prison, "with the result that he himself had to remove my fetters in the end. If I had opposed him my strength of mind would have become weakened and I could not have done those more important things that I had to do.

By my submissiveness I overcome most difficulties in prison. But the greatest good I derived from these sufferings was that by undergoing bodily hardships I could see my mental strength clearly increasing, and it is even now maintained. I feel that divine help is always with those who suffer for the sake of a righteous cause. Jesus Christ, Daniel, and Socrates represented the purest form of passive resistance of soul-force. All these teachers counted their bodies as nothing in comparison with their soul. In India the doctrine was understood and commonly practised long before it came into vogue in Europe."

XXVII

FREE AS A CLOUD

"HIS genius is free as a cloud and he will change notion or custom overnight if he hears a true word. This Ariel breaks as under all chains save those placed on his heels by the great Prospero of his life-long allegiance."

LLEWELYN POWYS

CHAPTER VIII

The Herald of Truth

*My thoughts are as a garden-plot, that knows
No rain but of thy giving, and no rose
Excepr thy name. I dedicate it thine,
My garden, full of fruits in harvest time.*

MU'TAMID, KING OF SEVILLE

(Translated from the Arabian by Dulcie L. Smith)

GANDHI is the greatest herald of truth in the twentieth century. He has dedicated his life to the study of truth as best he understands it. His colleague in Africa, S. L. Polak has called Gandhiji the 'Bird of Truth'. And a bird of truth he is. He does not merely seek freedom for India but true freedom alone can satisfy him.

"In one of Olive Schreiner's prose-poems, she pictures the adventures of the seeker after the 'bird of Truth' of which he had once had a vision, and she leaves him, dying on a mountain-top, clasping to his breast one feather that had fallen from the bird. The message that Gandhiji, in his seventieth year, leaves us with as may well be such a feather, and we shall be fortunate indeed if, at our own death, we have clasped it to our bosom and made it our own."

S. L. POLAK

I

THE NON-MATERIAL ATTITUDE

"TRUE, a great many worldly wise, successful and intelligent people may logically be impatient of a 'spiritual' attitude which robs them of success and distinction and power, condemns themselves and their children to poverty, and seemingly gives free reins, at any rate for the time being, to Hitler and other bullies. I chafe at it myself. I should funk the rigorous of life at Wardha.

"Be that as it may, Gandhiji's life and attitude represent something very deeply embedded into the Indian mind.

"This non-material attitude of India is, I venture to think—and I dare say that many Europeanised Indians as well as Europeans, may scorn me for so thinking—of considerable importance to the future of humanity. The Western world is caught in the grip of materialism: industrialisation, the need for markets, the desire for power, the growing realisation in the mind of the masses that they are 'poor' and ought to be richer and even the socialist cry for better conditions, and higher wages, all contribute to that grip and the success of materialism certainly means the establishment of a world not of freedom for the human spirit but of the regimentation of efficient robots."

LIONEL FIELDEN

II

BENEVOLENT DICTATORSHIP

"THE idea of a benevolent dictatorship seems to

emerge from his public pronouncements and from his insistence on non-violence. It is hardly necessary to say that his dreams of a new India are not shared by the financiers and industrialists who have provided the huge funds without which even the persuasive demagoguery of a Gandhi would have proved fruitless.

"Gandhi is a Bania by caste, the third grade in the Hindu social hierarchy. He believes in the caste system, and though he professes sympathy with the minorities, there is little doubt that he regards them all, outcasts, Muslims, Christians, as outside the pale, and expects them ultimately to submit to the rule of the Hindu majority. His practical disfranchisement of the outcast when by the coercive process of a fast-to-death in 1932 he induced them to give up their separate electorates supports this theory. Nehru emphasises the fact that the Congress movement is still bourgeois, in other words a caste-Hindu movement, with a programme opposed to the interests of the masses who gave Congress its victory at the polls in 1937. For this Gandhi must accept responsibility.

"Many other prominent Hindus outside Congress' like Nehru, condemn Gandhi's religious exploitation of the masses. Prominent among them is one of India's greatest sons, with a world-wide reputation, Rabindra Nath Tagore. In his role of religious ascetic Tagore admired Gandhi but he utterly disapproved of his use of religious mysticism for political ends. He saw the danger of mental despotism loom near; he sensed the danger of blind obedience that Gandhi demanded from his followers. 'Should India alone,' he asks, 'Recite the chapter of negation, dwell eternally on the

faults of others and strive for swaraj on the basis of hatred?"

—SIR WILLIAM BARTON

III

SOCRATES AND GANDHI

"FROM time to time he seemed to be guided by some inner voice. Other great men at different periods of the world's history have had a similar experience. For example, Socrates and St. Paul."

—VISCOUNT SANKEY

Thus writes H. N. Brailsford:—

"When last I was in Poona, Gandhi was a prisoner and I was not allowed to meet him. Then the town, gloomy and angry, was involved in a general strike. To-day it is celebrating the spring carnival in a mood of gaiety.

"Gandhi in his turn was happy when I met him. for Mr. Attlee's speech in the Indian debate had just opened the road to independence. He looked well and very much less than his age. He talked easily without a trace of tension. His manner was never solemn and often he relaxed in a humorous chuckle. In a way hard to define one felt that this man was speaking for India. Though his moral stature lifts him high above the average man, he interprets what is typical and enduring in this nation's outlook. He warned me, none-the-less, that he would be speaking only for himself and not for the Congress.

"Our talk took its start from the Prime Minister's recognition of India's right to choose independence.

This Gandhi welcomed and not only this but the whole tone of the speech. 'But I can't forget,' he went on, 'that the story of Britain's connection with India is a tragedy of unfulfilled promises and disappointed hopes. We must keep an open mind. A seeker of truth will never begin by discounting his opponent's statement as unworthy of trust. So I am hopeful, and indeed no responsible Indian feels otherwise. This time I believe that the British mean business. But the offer has come suddenly. Will India be jerked into independence? I feel to-day like a passenger who has been hoisted in a basket-chair on to a ship's deck in a stormy sea and has not yet found his feet. There should have been some psychological preparation, but even now it is not too late. The tide of bitterness had risen high and that is not good for the soul. The last two months should have been filled with generous gestures. This is a milestone not only in India's history and Britain's but in the history of the whole world'.

"Gandhi's meaning was clear. The British Government had done the right thing, but in its manner of doing it, he missed the big touch. When I asked him for concrete illustrations, he chose two. The release of the political prisoners had been gradual and was still incomplete. 'There was no danger to fear. If independence is coming would these men have opposed it? A complete amnesty would have captured the people's imagination. When you are about to transfer power you should do it boldly.'"

He went on to speak of the Salt Tax. "Its abolition would be a gesture the poorest peasant could

pendence. You may object that by so doing I am throwing away the protection of the British army and navy. India would not need them, if she were truly non-violent. If in the glow of freedom, she could live up to that creed, no power on earth would ever cast an evil eye upon her. That would be India's crowning glory and her contribution to the world's progress.

"If only Englishmen could follow this argument of mine, they would make their offer of independence in a different tone altogether. To-day they insist that Dominion Status is the best gift they can possibly bestow; still, if Indians do choose independence, they shall have it. No, that is the wrong attitude. I should like to hear Englishmen saying: 'For the world's sake and for ours, as well as your own, you shall have independence to-day, even as we have it.'"

With some sense of incongruity, for Brailsford was descending to a lower level, he now asked Gandhi to face the anxieties of his English listeners and tell them whether Indian independence would make for Britain's security and the world's. He answered that the British need never fear an independent India. If they leave India as willing friends, she in her turn will always remain friendly. But Britain, he told him, might hope for some assurance of friendship. Would an independent India be willing to enter into an alliance with Britain?

Gandhi's answer came promptly. "Supposing India said no. Would you make the recognition of India's independence contingent upon her entering

you and we can rise to this moral height, no danger can alarm us. It is probable that many members of the Congress will not take this view and may be willing to discuss an alliance to-day. But independence should come free as air: don't let us bargain over it."

In reply to a further question, whether a defensive alliance might be discussed, when independence is ratified by treaty, Gandhi replied: "If India feels the glow of independence she probably would enter into such a treaty of her own free will. The spontaneous friendship between India and Britain would then be extended to other Powers and among them they would hold the balance, since they alone would possess moral force. To see that vision realised I want to live for 125 years."

This was the high moment of talk. Brailsford had heard Gandhi's message. But there are still some details he ought to report. He said that he hoped for a mutually helpful commercial treaty between a friendly Britain and an independent India. For goods that India needed to import he was even ready to give Britain a preference.

While they talked of Pakistan, Gandhi said that if no other method of solution succeeded he was prepared to submit the whole issue to international arbitration. Nor should we forget that expedient, if any insoluble question arose between Britain and India, for example over debts. But he saw no blank wall of difficulty ahead. His last words were that difficulties make the man.

Brailsford came away with the sense that he had been talking to a brave man who has the courage to be-

that human society can be built only on moral principles. Amid our pre-occupations over military perils he stands aloof and repeats with unshaken faith his creed that safety is attainable, only when men learn to treat each other as brothers and equals. No other means will avail.

IV

THORNS AND ROSES

"LET others, too, bring him their tribute. He has often been pricked and scarred, by the bitter thorns. Let us offer him now the roses of our gratitude."

V

PRACTICAL IDEALIST

GANDHI makes it his chief concern to "transform ideas into facts"; he has called himself a 'practical idealist,' thus decisively repudiating the idea that his teaching is nothing but an unrealizable 'dream, a Utopia.

"It is precisely by the fact that he has never over-estimated actual possibilities, always kept his demands within the practical limits of the actual situation at the moment, had the courage at once to repeal orders that had miscarried, it is just by the restrictions, he imposed on himself, that Gandhi proves himself an able practical politician. He does, it is true, proclaim the law of perfect love, but he declares at the same time that it would be unreasonable to expect the masses to submit completely to this law at present. He knows quite well that the mora

demands he puts forward cannot be realized in a day, and has declared that his ideal is "like Euclid's line, which exists only in imagination, never capable of being physically drawn. It is nevertheless an important definition in Geometry yielding great results".

Gandhi looks on the non-co-operation movement as merely the first step towards a future ideal world. He reminds the representatives of the old political methods, who call his plans impracticable and fantastic, that "the steam engineer was laughed at by the horse dealer till he saw that even horses could be transported by the steam engine. The electrical engineer was no doubt called a faddist and a madman in steam-engine circles till work was actually done over the wires. It may be long before the law of love will be recognised in international affairs. Yet if only we watched the latest international developments in Europe and Eastern Asia with an eye to essentials, we could see how the world is moving steadily to realize that between nation and nation, as between man and man, force has failed to solve problems."

VI

EAST AND WEST

THE many thousand year old Indian Empire is now undergoing a mighty historical process. The European civilization takes hold of India by means of modern methods of government and administration, with schools, factories, railways, and motor-cars. Enormous factory buildings, hotels, and warehouses are forcing their way among the fantastic palaces and temples, motor-cars and motor-bicycles are mingling

with the heavy tread of the sacred cows and elephants, the pattering of the herds of asses, and the creaking of the teams of oxen.

The old India is once again girding herself for a mighty effort, is uniting to withstand the invasion of an alien Europe, and is ready to sacrifice deeply rooted traditions, if only the hated "satanic civilization" can in this way be checked. Thus one of the greatest liberation movements in all history is beginning: the calling of the pariahs to free humanity so that they, too, may take part in the fight against the foreigner. So terrible does the danger threatening from the West seem to the Indian people that the whole country has united, and all the profound conflicts between races and creeds give way before the anxiety to save their menaced Asiatic culture. All religious castes and races, Hindus and Mohammedans, Parsees and Sikhs, Brahmans and pariahs, rich and poor, are taking their stand as a unified Indian nation against Europe. In religious defiance the whole country is gathering round a symbol of the most primitive hand-work, of a long superseded archaic machine, round the banner of the spinning-wheel.

VII

THE POLITICAL GURU

THREE hundred million men are obeying the command of the man who first created a nation out of these countless creeds and tribes, a man who is entirely their own, who speaks their language and prays their prayers, who appeared before the Viceroy clad in a loin-cloth like the humblest of his country-

men, to treat of the future of India on equal terms with the all-powerful representative of the British World Empire. Gandhi's followers are in line with truth when they believe that the real India wants no other leader than the Mahatma and no other policy than the preaching of the ancient ideal of Ahimsa, and that India was well advised when she decided to follow the prophet of sympathy and truth. The figure of the modern cosmopolitan professional politician imported from Europe is alien to the nature of India, and would never arrive at any real inner understanding with the people. What India needs is just that blending of the religious and the political which is incorporated in Gandhi, the type of the "political Guru".

VIII

THE FOURTH DIMENSION

THE representative of spiritual India which does not mean orthodox—religious India—is Gandhi, and the character of Gandhi is as puzzling as the fourth dimension. Is he saint or politician or both? Is he, as some think, nearer to Christ and Christ's teaching than anyone else in this modern materialistic fighting world, or is he as others hold an impishly adroit Machiavelli using Christianity as a tool? How far does he really represent India, and India's future?

I doubt whether anyone, unless he had the hide of hippopotamus and the mind of a fossilized blimp, could fail to perceive the goodness of the man: a goodness may be as irritating to politicians as Christ was to Pilate, but nevertheless good. Yet there, are the

hippopotami and the blimps, and after my first meeting, I might well have been one of them.

The bother about Gandhi as far as Englishmen are concerned is that he makes you feel small, or to put it a little differently he makes you feel that your soul, or your motives if you like may be rather mean and paltry. He does not do this purposely: he would be the last person in the world to humiliate anyone: it is simply that his whole attitude denies yours and you must either turn an uncomfortable mental somersault or else like the rich young man with Christ go away exceedingly sorrowful and generally exceedingly bitter and calling Gandhi an old rogue, in order that you may safely rationalise your own way of life again and close up the horrid vista of spiritual emptiness which Gandhi inevitably discloses.

—LIONAL FIELDON

IX CONSTRUCTIVE WORK

The Saint of Sewagram has replied to important questions as follows:—

How can a person in military do constructive work?

A.—A military man who has any grit in him can take up spinning together with the anterior and posterior processes. He can go in for paper-making or any other village-craft during his leisure hours. Army men have plenty of leisure when they are not fighting. Even when there is fighting all are not engaged in it though they have to stand-by ready. Thus they can

learn all those activities which are being conducted for the freedom of India. They should learn the national language in the two scripts. All this study must be coupled with a burning love of freedom and the courage to stand true to one's conviction and to act accordingly even if one is left alone. In no way does this conflict with military discipline. I do not believe in indulging in indiscipline especially in military service. Nor is there any room in my scheme of things for secret activity. Adherence to these principles is the only correct course for an individual or a people.

Q.—It is supposed to be a sign of ill-breeding not to leave some food on one's plate after finishing a meal? The contrary is supposed to be the correct thing to do.

A.—It passes my comprehension how such action can be tolerated, especially in the face of the threatened famine. I do not know the reason for this practice and it would be waste of time to inquire into it. I consider it to be a sign of vulgarity and lack of perspective to have more on one's plate than one requires. In the present time no one is really entitled to full meals. Waste would be a sign of callousness. On the other hand, I consider it good breeding and discrimination to leave one's plate clean of leavings. It saves too the time of those who wash up. It is thoughtful and correct before beginning a meal to remove what one considers excess from one's plate on to a clean plate. Hosts should be discriminating and have enough delicate regard to find out what their guests require in the way of food and then give them no more than what they want.

Q.—Writing letters in blood and using blood for auspicious marks is becoming almost a fashion. Ought it not to be stopped?

A.—To my mind this is a revolting practice. It causes no hurt to take a little blood from oneself. In these days in particular, blood-letting can be performed without the slightest pain or inconvenience. If too much is taken from him the donor experiences weakness. But to write or sign letters in one's own blood is neither bravery nor does it connote any sacrifice or suffering. It is nothing more or less than criminal folly and ought to be abjured. Not only that. It is a duty to stop it. The easiest way is for all leaders not to countenance such a vulgar and uncivilized practice.

X

SOLDIERS AND WAR

MAHATMA GANDHI answers the question whether the selling of blankets to soldiers will not amount to helping the war.

"I have no right to enquire about the caste of my customer" while selling my wares to him and, therefore, I must sell my wares to all including soldiers. Theoretically speaking, this amounts to helping the war but we cannot live in India or, for that matter, in any part of the world without rendering such theoretical help to the war, because everything we do or say helps the war. Travelling in a train or posting letters or even eating one's own food is all some kind of helping the war, for everything that the individual does in one way or the other helps the war. The fact

is that no one can faithfully follow the noble principle of non-violence to its logical conclusions.

Mahatma Gandhi further illustrates this point by referring to Euclid's definition of a line which has no dimensions but in practice, even when a fine line is drawn it assumes some thickness. The principle of non-violence, Mahatma Gandhi maintains, is also subject to such limitations and conditions. People can follow it only as far as practicable.

Mahatma Gandhi adds that he could easily have forbidden the sale of blankets to soldiers, but this would have meant a matter of shame to him inasmuch as he would be concealing thereby his honest view. "Where can I fix the limits?" asks Mahatma Gandhi. "Should I not sell rice and pulses as a dealer to soldiers? As a chemist am I not to sell quinine and other drugs to soldiers? Does my non-violence permit such a trade? Should I restrict my trade by enquiring about the caste of my customers? The answer is if my trade helps society and does not help in destroying society, I should not worry about the caste of my customer and it becomes my duty to sell my merchandise even to a soldier."

XI

THE ETERNAL PROBLEM

ANSWERING a question: "Why can't you see that whilst there is possession it must be defended against all odds? Therefore, your insistence that violence should be eschewed in all circumstances is utterly unworkable and absurd. I think non-violence

is possible only for select individuals," Mahatma Gandhi writes in "Harijan" under the caption "The Eternal Problem":

"This question has been answered often enough in some form or other in these columns as also in those of 'Young India'. But it is an ever-green. I must answer it as often as it is put, especially when it comes from an earnest seeker as this one does. I claim that even now, though the social-structure is not based on a conscious acceptance of non-violence, all the world over mankind lives and men retain their possessions on the sufferance of one another. If they had not done so, only the fewest and the most ferocious would have survived. But such is not the case. Families are bound together by ties of love, and so are groups in the so-called civilised society, called nations. Only they do not recognise the supremacy of the law of non-violence. It follows, therefore, that they have not investigated its vast possibilities. Hitherto out of sheer inertia, shall I say, we have taken it for granted that complete non-violence is possible only for the few who take the vow of non-possession and the allied abstinences? Whilst it is true that the votaries alone can carry on research work and declare from time to time the new possibilities of the great eternal law governing man, if it is the law, it must hold good for all.

"The many failures we see are not of the law but of the followers, many of whom do not even know that they are under that law willynilly. When a mother dies for her child she unknowingly obeys the law. I have been pleading for the past fifty years

for a conscious acceptance of the law and its zealous practice even in the face of failures. Fifty years' work has shown marvellous results and strengthened my faith.

• "I do claim that by constant practice we shall come to a state of things when lawful possession will command universal and voluntary respect. No doubt such possession will not be tainted. It will not be an insolent demonstration of the inequalities that surround us everywhere. Nor need the problem of unjust and unlawful possessions appeal the votary of non-violent weapon of satyagraha and non-co-operation which hitherto has been found to be a complete substitute of violence, whenever it has been applied honestly in sufficient measure.

"I have never claimed to present the complete science of non-violence. It does not lend itself to such treatment. So far as I know no single physical science does, not even the very precise science of mathematics. I am but a seeker, and I have fellow seekers like the questioner whom I invite to accompany me in the very difficult but equally fascinating search.

XII

WHAT TO DO?

UNDER the caption "What To Do?" Mahatma Gandhi writes in "Harijan":

A friend sends the following questions:

Question (1) You have all along held and expressed the view that persons should observe strict non-violence even when attacked by hooligans or

others. Does this hold good when women are attacked or outraged? If people are unable to follow your lead regarding non-violence, would you advise them to die as cowards or resist aggression with violence?

Question (2). Should you not unequivocally condemn the dual role that the Muslim League is playing today? While, on the one hand, its leaders are openly preaching violence and Jihad against Hindus, the same men continue, on the other hand, to hold office as ministers, having a controlling hand on all the threads of administration including police and justice.

Question (3). Is there no constituted authority in India which can put a stop to this grave anomaly which is unprecedented in history?

Question (4). Do you realise that if the present happenings are allowed to continue, civil war will become inevitable? How would you advise your countrymen to face such a catastrophe, if it comes?

Answer (1). In a society of my imagination, outrage posed by the questioner cannot take place. But in the society in the midst of which we are living, such outrages do take place. My answer is unequivocal. A non-violent man or woman will and should die without retaliation, anger or malice, in self-defence or in defending the honour of his womenfolk. This is the highest form of bravery.

If an individual or a group of people are unable or unwilling to follow this great law of life, which is misnamed my lead, retaliation or resistance unto death

is the second best, though a long way off from the first. Cowardice is impotence—worse than violence.

Lastly, let me add that if women had followed or would now follow my advice, every woman would protect herself without caring or waiting for aid from her brother or her sister.

Answer (2). Of course, the dual role adverted to is unequivocally bad. It is a sad chapter in our national life. My condemnation is of universal application. Fortunately it is so bad that it cannot last long.

Answer (3). The only constituted authority is the British. We are all puppets in their hands. But it would be wrong and foolish to blame that authority. It acts according to its nature. That authority does not compel us. We voluntarily rush into their camp. It is, therefore, open to any and every one of us to refuse to play the British game.

Let us also admit frankly that the British authority is struggling to quit India. It does not know how. It honestly wants to leave India but wants before leaving to undo the wrong it has been doing for so long.

Being in the position of the toad under the harrow I must know where it hurts. I have been telling the authority, if it will undo the wrong quickly leave India to her fate. But those who compose the British service cannot realise this obvious fact. They flatter themselves with the belief that they know India better than we know ourselves. Having successfully kept us under subjection for over a century, they claim the right to constitute themselves judges of our destiny. We may not grumble if we are to

come into our own through the way of peace. Satyagraha is never vindictive. It believes not in destruction, but in conversion. Its failures are due to the weakness of the satyagrahi, not to any defect in the law itself. The British authority, having decided to quit, whatever the reason will show growing defects and weaknesses. Parties will find that it is more and more a broken reed. And when parties quarrel as Hindus and Muslims do, let one or the other or both realise that, if India is to be an independent nation, one or both must deliberately cease to look to British authority for protection.

Answer. (4). This brings me to the last question. We are not yet in the midst of civil war. But we are nearing it. At present we are playing at it. War is a respectable term for goondaism practised on a mass or national scale. If the British are wise, they will keep clear of it. Appearances are to contrary. Even the English members in the provincial Assemblies refuse to see that they were given seats by the Act of 1935 not because it was right, but in order that they might protect British interest and keep Hindus and Muslims apart. But they do not see this. It is a small matter. Nevertheless it is a straw showing the way the wind is blowing.

Lovers and maker of Swaraj must not be dismayed by these omens. My advice is satyagraha first and satyagraha last. There is no other or better road to freedom. Whoever wants to drink the water of freedom must steel himself against seeking military or police aid.

He or they must ever rely upon their own strong arms or what is infinitely better, their strong

mind and will which are independent of each other, their own or other's.

XIII

THE EPIDEMIC OF FAST

"FASTING has become a veritable epidemic. The blame lies at your door." So writes a correspondent and adds: "One can understand the efficacy of a fast for purposes of inward purification as also for the outward. But fasts are undertaken nowadays for an increment in one's own pay or in that of one's ground for being selected as a candidate for the Assembly or for various other causes. You encourage one man for fasting for the removal of untouchability and yet you are willing to let another die who is doing the same for a different cause. Is this not injustice? Should you not lay down rules as to when to fast and when not to, what should be its duration, should fruit juices be taken or only water? You talk of the inner voice where you are concerned. Would it not really be best if you were to stop undertaking fasts yourself and stop others too?"

He answers:—

There is force in the above argument. It is, however, impossible to lay down rules. Experience alone can suggest rules. In particular cases it is open to a person to frame his own law or he can refer to me, if he believes me to be an authority. I have had the temerity to claim that fasting is an infallible weapon in the armoury of Satyagraha. I have used it myself, being the author of Satyagraha. Anyone whose fast is related to Satyagraha should seek my permission and

obtain it in writing before embarking on it. If this advice is followed there is no need for framing rules, as any rate, in my lifetime.

One general principle, however, I would like to enunciate. A Satyagrahi should fast only as a last resort when all other avenues of redress have been explored and have failed. There is no room for imitation in fasts. He who has no inner strength should not dream of it and never with attachment to success. But if a Satyagrahi once undertakes a fast from conviction, he must stick to his resolve whether there is a chance of his action bearing fruit or not. This does not mean that fasting cannot or can bear fruit. He who fasts in the expectation of fruit generally fails. And even if he does not seemingly fail, he loses all the inner joy which a true fast holds.

Whether one should take fruit juices or not depends on one's physical powers of endurance. But no more fruit juice than is absolutely necessary for the body should be taken. He probably has the greatest inner strength who takes only water.

It is wrong to fast for selfish ends e.g., for increase in one's own salary. Under certain circumstances it is permissible to fast for an increase in wages on behalf of one's group.

Ridiculous fasts spread like a plague and are harmful. But when fasting becomes a duty it cannot be given up. Therefore I do fast when I consider it to be necessary and cannot abstain from it on any scope. What I do myself I cannot prevent others from doing under similar circumstances. It is common knowledge

that the best of good things are oftens abused.' We see this happening every day.

XIV

MEANING OF GOD

WHAT is the meaning of God? Gandhiji quotes a correspondent in "Harijan":

"I am reading your "Gita Bodh" these day and trying to understand it. I am puzzled by what Lord Krishna says in the 10th discourse. "In dicer's play I am 'the conquering double eight. Nothing either good or evil, can take place in this world without my will." Does God then permit evil? If so, how can He punish the evil-doer? Has God created the world for this purpose? Is it impossible then for mankind to live in peace?"

The Mahatma replies :

"To say that God permits evil in this world may not be pleasing to the ear. But if He is held responsible for the good, it follows that He has to be responsible for the evil too. Did not God permit Ravana to exhibit unparalled strength? Perhaps, the root cause of the perplexity arises from a lack of the real understanding of what God is. God is not a person. He transcends description. He is the Law-maker, the Law and the Executor. No human being can well arrogate these powers to himself. If he did, he would be looked upon as an unadulterated dictator. They become only Him whom we worship as God. This is the reality, a clear understanding of which will answer the question raised by the correspondent.

“The question whether it is impossible for mankind ever to be at peace with one another does not arise from the verse quoted. The world will live in peace only when the individuals composing it make up their minds to do so. No one can deny the possibility nor say when that will come to pass. Such questions are idle waste of time. To a good man, the whole world is good. By following this golden rule the correspondent can live in peace under all circumstances, believing that what is possible for him to be is also possible for others. To believe the contrary connotes pride and arrogance.”

“I have not talked about wishing to live up to the age of 125 years without thought. It has a deep significance,” he writes in the *Harijan*. He adds: “The basis for my wish is the third ‘mañtra’ from ‘Ishopanishad’ which, literally rendered, means that a man should desire to live for 125 years while serving with detachment.

“My sole purpose is to indicate the condition necessary for the realization of the desire. It is service in a spirit of detachment, which means complete independence of the fruit of action. Without it one should not desire to live for 125 years. That is how I interpret the text. I have not the slightest doubt that without attaining that state of detachment, it is impossible to live to be 125 years old. Living to that age must never mean a mere life like unto death, like that of an animated corpse, a burden on one’s relations and society. In such circumstances one’s supreme duty would be to pray to God for early release and not for prolongation of life anyhow.

“The human body is meant solely for service, never for indulgence. The secret of happy life lies in renunciation. Renunciation is life. Indulgence spells death. Therefore everyone has a right and should desire to live 125 years while performing service without an eye on result. Such life must be wholly and solely dedicated to service. Renunciation made for the sake of such service is ineffable joy of which none can deprive one, because that nectar springs from within and sustains life. In this there can be no room for worry or impatience. Without this joy, long life is impossible and would not be worth while even if possible.

“Examination of the possibility of prolonging life to 125 years by outward means is outside the scope of this argument.”

CHAPTER XI

How Gandhi Faces the Riots

*The gourd has still its bitter leaves,
And deep the crossing at the ford.
I wait my Lord.*

*The ford is brimming to its banks;
The pheasant cries upon her mate.
My Lord is late.*

*The boatsman still keeps beckoning,
And others reach their journey's end.
I wait my friend.*

—AN ANCIENT CHINESE FOLKSONG

[Translated by Helen Wendell]

EVEN though Mahatma Gandhi has pushed the battle of freedom along the most non-violent lines, yet he has realized that the gourd of communalism has its bitter leaves and the ford in the river of independence is pretty deep. But Mahatma Gandhi, like the boatsman, still keeps us beckoning.

Mahatma Gandhi was not disturbed when his train very narrowly escaped derailment between Bombay and Poona. The boulders were found placed on the rails. Only 32 minutes before another train had passed uninterrupted.

In its columns the "Morning Standard" described the incident as a "well-planned scheme, probably hatched and controlled from Bombay by a person who must have been well-informed of Gandhiji's movements and the exact time of the departure of his train." The paper adds: "Behind the attempt to wreck the Gandhi's special on its way to Poona lies a well-planned move to commit a cold-blooded political murder".

Speaking for the first time on his return from Delhi, Gandhiji made a reference in the course of an after-prayer speech to the accident in which his train, very narrowly escaped.

"Throughout my life I have escaped death several times very narrowly. This is because I want to live for 125 years to serve you all. I have done no harm to anybody during all my life. What can anybody gain by killing such an innocent person? It was the grace of God and the power of 'Ram Nama' that saved me. Who can kill a person whom Rama protects and who can save a man whom he does not want to live?"

II

WHAT CAN VIOLENCE DO?

"CALCUTTA has given an ocular demonstration of what direct action is and how it is to be done. It has earned a bad repute of late. It has seen too many wild demonstrations during the past few months. If the evil reputation is sustained for sometime longer, it will cease to be the city of palaces. It will become the city of dead," said Mahatma Gandhi in the "Harijan" under the caption "What can Violence Do?"

... Mahatma Gandhi wrote. "If newspaper reports are to be believed, responsible Ministers in Sind and other equally responsible Leaguers, almost all over, are preaching violence in naked language. Nakedness is itself a virtue, as distinguished from hypocrisy. But when it is a hymn of obscenity, it is vice to be shunned, whether it resides in a Leaguer or any other person. Any Muslim who is not in the League is a traitor, says one. The Hindu is a 'kafir' deserving the fate of such, says another.

... Who is the gainer? Certainly not the Muslim masses nor the sober followers of Islam, which itself means sobriety and peace.

... The very salute "Salam-alaiikum" means "Peace be unto you."

... "Violence may have its place in life but not that which we have witnessed in Calcutta, assuming of course, that newspaper accounts are to be trusted. Pakistan of whatever hue does not lie through senseless violence. When I write of senseless violence, I, naturally, assume the possibility of sensible violence, whatever the latter may be. The Calcutta demonstration was not an illustration of sensible violence.

"What senseless violence does is to prolong the lease of the life of the British or foreign rule. I believe that the authors of the State Paper issued by the Cabinet Mission desire peaceful transfer of power to representative Indian hands. But if we need the use of the British gun and bayonet, the British will not go, or, if they do, some other foreign Power will take their place. We will make a serious mistake if

every time the British bayonet is used. We trot out the "agent provocation". No doubt he has been at work. Let us not ride that horse to death.

"Would that the violence of Calcutta were sterilized and did not become a signal for its spread all over. It depends upon the leaders of the Muslim League, of course. But the rest will not be free from responsibility. They can retaliate or refrain. Retaining is easy and simple if there is the will. Retaliation is complicated. Will it be tooth against tooth or many against one?"

"It should be common cause that looting in itself can never do any good. Wherever it is claimed to have done so, good consisted only in drawing the attention of the authority to a crying want", says Mahatma Gandhi in "Harijan" replying to a correspondent who asks whether it could be permissible to resort to something in the nature of his Dharasana salt raid in order to save the people in case Government or private godown foodgrains were being allowed to rot while people were starving.

III

VOLUNTARY FASTING

MAHATMA GANDHI says that the way of voluntary fasting he has suggested is the most efficient because it is good in itself and good also as an effective demonstration. It is good in itself because the people who voluntarily fast exhibit strength of will which saves them from the pangs of hunger and makes up public conscience, as also that of the

authority, assuming that the latter can have any conscience at all.

Dealing with Dharasana salt raid, he says :—

“ Apart from the fact that there were, according to my conception of it, several mistakes made, it was a perfect thing of its kind and a heroic struggle in which the sufferings undergone were bravely borne. But the distinction between it and loot should be clearly borne in mind. The Dharasana salt works were conceived to be national property. The intention there was not to seize the property by force. The fight was to assert the right of the nation to the possession of all salt yielded by land or sea in India. If the raid had succeeded, that is to say, if the Government had yielded, they would have done so to the nation's sufferings which the raid and the like involved. And, as a matter of fact, the sum-total of the sufferings undergone by the people on a nation-wide scale did result in what is known as the Irwin-Gandhi Pact. Thus it will be seen that between the loot that the correspondent has in mind and the Dharasana raid there is no analogy whatsoever.”

IV

MUTINY IN THE NAVY

“ I have followed the events now happening in India with painful interest. This mutiny in the navy, and what is following, is not, in any sense of the term, non-violent action. Inasmuch as a single person is compelled to shout ‘ Jai Hind ’ or any popular slogan, a ‘ nail is driven into the coffin of swaraj ’ in terms of the dumb millions of India.

"Destruction of churches and the like is not the way to swaraj, as defined by the Congress. Looting and burning of tram-cars and other property, insulting and injuring Europeans, is not non-violence of the Congress type, much less mine, if and in so far as it may be different from the Congress. Let the known and unknown leaders of this thoughtless orgy of violence know what they are doing and then follow their bent.

"Let it not be said that India of the Congress spoke to the world of winning swaraj through non-violent action and belied her word in action and that too at the critical period in her life."

V

THOUGHTLESS VIOLENT ACT

I have deliberately used the adjective "thoughtless". For, there is such a thing as thoughtful violent action. What I see happening now is not thoughtful. If the Indian members of the navy know and appreciate non-violence, the way of non-violent resistance can be dignified, mainly and wholly affective, if it is corporate. For the individual it always is. Why should they continue to serve if service is humiliating for them or India? An action like this I have called non-violent non-co-operation. As it is, they are setting a bad and unbecoming example for India.

A combination between Hindus and Muslims and others for the purpose of violent action is unholy and will lead to, and probably is, a preparation for mutual violence—bad for India and the world.

The rulers have declared their intention to 'quit' in favour of Indian rule. Let the action be not delayed by a moment because of the exhibition of distressful unrest which has been lying hidden in the breast. Their might is unquestioned. Its use beyond the bare requirement will be unworthy and even wicked if it is made to suppress the people or a portion of them. The latter have been far too long under the foreign heel.

Mahatma Gandhi, addressing the prayer meeting at Poona, said that the outbreak of communal riots in Ahmedabad had pained him deeply and that he had told Mr. Morarji Desai, Bombay's Home Minister, who had come to see him before his departure for Ahmedabad, that he (Mr. Desai) must go to meet the flames under the sole protection of God, not that of police and military. If need be, he must perish in the flames in the attempt to quell them as the late Mr. Ganesh Shanker Vidyarthi had gone.

VI

IT IS A SHAME

"It was a shame that they should have to take the help of the police and the military", said Gandhiji, "to prevent them from flying at each other's throats. If one side ceased to retaliate, the riots could not go on. What did it matter if even a few lakhs were killed in the right manner, out of the forty crores of India? If they could learn the lesson of dying without killing, India, which was celebrated in legend and history as Karma Bhoomi a land of duty, would become a virtual Eden-image of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth".

"In the deaths of spotless victims lies the seed of true liberty", said Mahatma Gandhi commenting on Mr. Kakodakar's fast in Goa prison in his week's "Harijan".

"The game of hunting the lover of civil liberty is going on merrily in Goa. A small power, because of its smallness, often acts with impunity, where a great power cannot. If the facts are as they have come to me, Shri Purushottam Kakodakar is fasting in his prison and may soon join the majority. As a believer unto death in Satyagraha, neither I nor any Satyagrahi should deplore the death. In such deaths of spotless victims lies the seed of true liberty.

"But what of the Portuguese power which boasts of philanthropy and alliance with the Roman Catholic Church? That power will have to justify itself before man and God. The blood of the innocents (assuming the innocence of the victims) will cry out from their tombs or their ashes. It is more potent than the voice of the living, however, powerful and eloquent."

"I have been asked whether the brother or other near relatives of the late Bhai Rajabali should demand compensation in money from Government for his murder?" writes Mahatma Gandhi in today's "Harijan" under the caption "Compensation for Murder".

"The deceased himself would not have counted such a death as loss. As a matter of fact, it is murder such as this which, if as a whole unavenged, will ultimately put an end to murder. The moment any compensation or revenge is sought, the good of the willing sacrifice is wiped out. And how then could the spirit of the deceased rest in peace?

"Murder can never be avenged by either murder or taking compensation. The only way to avenge murder is to offer oneself as a willing sacrifice, with no desire for retaliation. Those who believe in this promise will never dream of demanding or taking any compensation for the loss of their dear ones. The principle of taking of life for life will, on the contrary, only lead to an increase of murders. This is apparent to all today. Revenge or compensation may furnish some satisfaction to the individual, but I am quite definite that it can never restore peace to or uplift society.

"The question arises as to what the individual should do in a society where revenge is the rule. The answer lies not in precept but in example and those alone can set the example who have been wronged. Therefore, the final decision must rest with Bhai Rajabali's relatives. My duty lay in pointing them the way of Ahimsa as I knew it."

VII

TESTING THE TECHNIQUE OF AHIMSA

MAHATMA GANDHI left Kazirkhil for Srirampur on his new plan to test the technique of Ahimsa. He was accompanied by Prof. Nirmal Bose to act as his interpreter and his stenographer. Mr. Parasuram.

One member of Gandhiji's party had been assigned to leave for other villagers in different directions.

Touching scenes were witnessed when Mahatma Gandhi left Kazirkhil camp for Srirampur.

A short prayer was held before departure, and was attended by all members. When Gandhiji took leave of them there were tears in the eyes of everyone (except Gandhiji), specially of Dr. Sushila Nayyar and Mrs. Ava Gandhi. They were weeping till the boat carrying Gandhiji to Srirampur was out of sight.

Gandhiji was grave, but when his boat was to move he bade farewell with his usual smile, without a word.

Mr. Thakkar, accompanied by Mrs. Ava Gandhi and Mr. Arunangshuji of Khadi Pratisthan Ashram, left for Charmandal, in Lakshmipur Thana.

Gandhiji on the eve of his departure for Srirampur village explained in an interview the significance underlying the new experiment which he was launching now.

The question asked was: "Will the new experiment which you propose to inaugurate of going and living singly in the affected village infuse courage into the hearts of the refugees and succeed in persuading them to return to their villages? What is the significance underlying this experiment?"

Gandhiji replied: "The question would not arise if you know that I was going to a village for my own sake, that is, to test my Ahimsa. Then I am not going singly. There will be Mr. Nirmal Kumar Bose as my Bengali interpreter and my stenographer, Mr. Parasuram, from the South. If I have the requisite courage and full inner Ahimsa, I should expect to affect both Hindus and Muslims in the right manner.

You should also know that all members of my original party will similarly distribute themselves taking with them a local Bengali worker. The choice of the village will rest with Sri Satish Chandra Das Gupta".

Asked whether the Bengal Government would not feel that his action was aimed at bringing ridicule on them, Gandhiji replied: "I think not, if only because I have not the remotest idea of bringing ridicule to them, assuming, of course, that the Bengal Government have meant every word of what they have said. Indeed, I am in search of a League Muslim who will harbour me in his house as a member of his family."

The next question put was: "Are you not taking serious liberty with your life at this stage by proposing to live in a village which is perhaps not free from goondas?"

Gandhiji replied: "I recognise no one as goonda—or all are goondas, some more, some less. I have got the conviction that so long as God wants my service in the present body, He will keep it from all harm".

VIII

BENGAL BLOODSHED AND BROTHERHOOD

Travelling by car and country boats through village canals green with water hyacinth Mahatma Gandhi visited a house in Ramganj Thana. Human skulls and bones, halfburnt woodlogs and scorched trees and wreckages of household goods, once preserved precious by the owners of 32 houses, were among evidences of the tragedy enacted here that were seen by Gandhiji.

About a hundred village women hurriedly gathered from nearby houses and were weeping all the time. They told Gandhiji that their vermillion marks and conchshell bangles, the auspicious rings of married women were forcibly broken and they were converted by hooligans.

Dr. Sushila Nayyar, Mrs. Ava Gandhi and Pyarelal could not check their tears. Mahatmaji was grave and from his eyes one could see that he was weeping within. Gandhiji, however, indicated by waving his hand that they need not worry and everything would be all right.

Gandhiji then walked to another village. He visited one of the oldest houses renowned for its Sanskrit scholars for 250 years. Sixteen houses had been burnt down in the area. One deaf and dumb person, the only member present in the house, saluted Gandhiji and showed the ravages wrought by hooligans. Gandhiji, who was observing silence, nodded his head, meaning thereby that he had understood everything.

Mahatma Gandhi and party visited village Gomatali about three miles from Dattapara, yesterday afternoon and saw the devastated villages, burnt and looted about one month back. Gandhiji was shown the burnt houses of Kamini Shaha who is reported to have been killed along with about 15 refugees when he was evacuating Gomatali with about 150 rescued refugees.

After minutely seeing these manmade ruins Gandhiji went to a nearby Harijan locality where he

met a large number of Harijan women and children. Tragic scenes moved everybody when a large number of Harijan ladies told Gandhiji their sad tales with tears trickling down their faces. They told Gandhiji that they did not want to live in that deserted village any longer as they sensed fresh danger of being killed any moment.

At village Sonachaka, the to-and-fro movements of a black dog named Kala, which belonged to the members of a family of whom eight were murdered attracted his notice. Villagers told Gandhiji that the dog belonged to the owner of the house who was himself murdered. They added that the dog wept day after day after his master was killed. The dog approached Gandhiji and led him to the place where the charred bones and skulls of eight persons could be seen. As Gandhiji went through the whole village this dog would not leave him, but followed him. Those accompanying Gandhiji were touched by the incident and the fidelity of the dog to his master.

At Thakurbari, Gandhiji was shown temples and houses which were looted and gods and goddesses thrown about.

Mahatma Gandhi on Monday visited Sonachaka and other affected villages about six miles from Dattapara. Gandhiji covered the whole distance partly by car and partly by country-made boat.

In the after-prayer speech here, he said that all that he wished to tell them was that whether they lived as one people or two, they should live as friends. If they did not wish to do so, they

should say so plainly. He would confess himself defeated.

The refugees could not stay on as refugees for ever. The Government could not go on feeding them. It was not possible for them to exist in that state for any length of time. If the Muslims did not want them back in their villages, they would have to go elsewhere. But even if every Hindu of East Bengal went away, he would still continue to live amidst the the Muslims of East Bengal and eat what they gave him or what he considered lawful for him.

For a thousand Hindus to surround a hundred Mussalmans or for a thousand Mussalmans to surround a hundred Hindus and oppress them was not bravery but cowardice. It had been said that the Hindus and the Muslims could not stay together as friends to co-operate with each other. No one could make him believe that, but if they did, they should say so. He would in that case not ask the Hindus to return to their homes. They would leave East Bengal, and it would be a shame for both the Mussalmans and the Hindus, if they did not mean it, they should tell the Hindus not to look to the military for protection, but to their Muslim brethren. The daughters and sisters and mothers of Hindus were their own daughters, sisters and mothers, and they should protect them with their own lives.

One man was said to have returned to his village last evening after the prayer meeting. He found his house surrounded by Muslims, they would not let him take his property. How could he, under these circumstances (if they were true) ask anyone to

go back? They should ponder over what he had said and let him know what they wished. He would advise the Hindus accordingly.

He was told, and he believed, that there were many good Muslims who would welcome the Hindus back, but the goondas stood in the way. He wished to tell them that if the good Muslims spoke openly with one voice and acting according to their profession, the so-called goondas would become ineffective and would mend their ways.

Several written questions had been submitted to him. One of them was, how could the refugees have the confidence to go back when the hooligans who had harassed them were still at large? Gandhiji replied that it was the duty of the Government to round up the hooligans, but his advice to the refugees was to leave the Government to attend to its duty. If the good Muslims invited them back wholeheartedly, they should return.

Another person had written that they were asked by their Muslim friends to stay on in their villages when the trouble was threatening. They had promised to look after them. Yet they had failed to protect them. How could they rely on their word now and go back?

Gandhiji said that in his opinion, if a good Hindu and a good Muslim came forth from each village and stood hostages for their safety, they could rely on their word. What was more, relying on God, they could return to their homes.

Over 5,000 people attended Gandhiji's evening prayer held in Ramgang Madhupur High School playground, about one mile from Gandhiji's residence at Kazirkhil.

While going to the prayer-ground, Gandhiji walked again along a narrow zigzag pathway through paddy fields awaiting to be harvested. Behind him there was a procession of men, women and children refugees, once belonging to respectable rich families, now reduced to the life of beggars. Most of them were wearing dirty clothes, their hair rough and their faces terror-stricken. There were women about 2,000 in number in that gathering, most of whom were just like widows without bangles in their hands and vermilion on their foreheads. With the arrival of lady relief workers from Calcutta, some of them have been provided with new bangles and vermilion. They were so terror-stricken that they would not move without being escorted by volunteers and others. There were children too who had lost all their books, etc., and were seen asking eagerly if they would now get some new books and playthings as their "Mahatma" was now in their midst. There were Muslims too in the gathering, many of whom joined in Gandhiji's prayer and were heard to appreciate inclusion of one stanza from the Koran which was recited by Mr. Kanu Gandhi as usual with prayer hymns.

As Gandhiji is on very low diet, he looked a bit tired. He was requested not to walk that long distance up to his residence. Gandhiji was carried, in a chair by four persons, including Mr. Kanu Gandhi.

Mahatma Gandhi and party visited village Karpura, about five miles from Kazirkhil on November 16 and saw sights of destruction and heard pathetic tales of suffering of the people. Gandhiji was told that about 30 people were murdered here on October 11. Hundred families were affected badly by house-burning, looting, arson and torture and abduction of women in this area.

A large number of women gave Gandhiji an idea of their sad tales and suffering with tears trickling from their eyes. They showed Gandhiji their hands without bangles and their foreheads without vermillion. Gandhiji asked them not to be ruffled but to face things calmly and await his decision.

The probable loss sustained by the victims in one village alone, as given by Mr. Manoranjan Choudhury, of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha amounted to over two lacs of rupees.

Gandhiji covered this journey in a motor-boat which passed through canals having dense jungles on both sides.

Earlier, on the way to Kazirkhil, Gandhiji addressed the people of Shahpur bazar.

At his prayer-meeting at Ramganj yesterday, Mahatma Gandhi said that he had come to stay in East Bengal till he saw reconciliation between the two communities. He asked both to be brave and fearless and shed all fear but of God.

He said he had come with the hope that he would have a frank talk with the Mussalmans and

that they would repent of their misdeeds, and request the Hindus not to leave their homes. If the repentance was genuine the Hindus would recognise their sincerity and regain lost confidence. But he could see that Hindus and Muslims of East Bengal had been embittered against one another. He would not go into the reasons thereof. But the Muslim brethren would let him say that, so far as he knew, in East Bengal they had been the aggressors. Palatial buildings had been destroyed, even the schools and temples were not spared. There was forcible conversion and abduction. The Hindus were mortally afraid of them. It was degrading for a human being to instil fear into another.

At Chaumuhani Muslims came to his meetings in large numbers, larger than the Hindus. But he did not know why they were avoiding him after the first meeting at Dattapara. It hurt him. He wanted the few Mussalmans, who were present in the meeting, to carry the message to the rest. A Muslim sister, who had been going about meeting the leading Muslims in these parts, had said that the Muslims told her plainly that they wanted orders from the League leaders before they could promise to befriend the Hindus or attend Gandhiji's meeting.

The exodus of the Hindus was still continuing. If the Muslims assured them that they were neighbours, friends and brothers and sons of the same soil, breathing the same air and drinking the same water, and that the Hindus had nothing to fear from them, the exodus would stop and even those who left their homes would return. Even animals were friendly to those

who befriended them. But man was made in the image of God. To justify his inheritance man has to return good for evil. Whosoever was at fault, this truth applied to both parties.

The Muslims wanted orders from the League. He could understand it. There was a League Government in the province. But that did not mean that the Government should be inimical to those outside the League. Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah Sahab had said that in Muslim majority provinces the minorities would be assured of full security and even be treated better than the Muslims. They should search their hearts and ask themselves if they had lived up to that message. So far as he knew, Islam did not permit forcible conversions and atrocities on women. What good could a mere repeating of the 'Kalma' do to those whose heart did not accept Islam. They should ask their leaders whether they were to be friends with the Hindus or enemies. If they wished to be enemies, the Hindus should be asked to leave East Bengal.

For himself, he had come to stay in East Bengal till he saw reconciliation between the two. Finally, he asked both to become brave and fearless and shed all fear but of God.

Gandhiji visited Muslim House, half a mile from his camp. The owner, a Maulvi came to take him, and Gandhiji walked along the narrow village road which was slippery due to occasional drizzling. At one place he had to cross a Shanko (bamboo bridge), reaching the Maulvi's house, Gandhiji talked with other members

of the family, enquired about the village population, how many were educated, how many read Al-Koran and whether those who read it, understood its meaning.

Gandhi was told that the village's Muslim population was 14 hundred of which only one was a Matriculate. About 150 boys had started schooling during the last two years. There were five Maulvis and about forty others who could read Bengali. About one thousand of them could read the Koran, but none understood the meaning. Gandhiji chatted with the children gathered around him.

Speaking after prayers Gandhiji said that he had never imagined that he would be able to come and settle down in a devastated village in Noakhali so soon. This became possible through Satish Babu's efforts; the reference is to Mr. Satish Chandra Das Gupta, head of Khadi Pratisthan, who has organised Gandhiji's tour. Continuing Gandhiji said that he had come here alone with two companions only.

His other companions had been left behind at Kazirkhil and each of them was, likewise to choose one village for himself.

Fear was a thing, Gandhiji continued, which he disliked. Why should one man be afraid of another man. Man should stand in fear of God alone and then he could shed all other fears.

Shri Pyare Lal had come to the meeting a short while ago. On the way he met about 150 refugees going away from the village with their belongings.

On enquiry refugees told him that they were afraid that when military and police would leave, there would be fresh trouble. Whilst, therefore, the roads were safe, they took opportunity of moving away to some place of safety.

But a man who was possessed by fear would not find safety anywhere. Gandhiji added, whatever help the military or police gave to such a man, who depends on military and police aid, was to add to one's helplessness. He would, therefore, like these refugees to develop personal courage so that they would consider it beneath their dignity to fly from fancied danger, merely for fear of losing their lives. Therefore, the better course for intending refugees would be to take personal courage from a man like him, who went to the affected villages, assuming of course, that they had the requisite courage.

But whether such courage he could personally infuse in another man or not, he did not know. Of late, he had lived amidst a number of companions. But now he had begun to say to himself "Now is the time if you want to know yourself. Go forth alone." It was, therefore, that he had come practically alone like this to the present village. With faith in God, he proposed to persevere so as to succeed in disarming all opposition and inspiring confidence. He would live here amidst Muslim villages, form intimate acquaintance with each family, know their mind, and help them also to know his mind. When they thus knew one another intimately, then would perhaps come the time when the atmosphere would change, and sweetness would prevail in relation, both to

Hindus and Mussalmans, where sourness was prevailing to-day.

"There is no limit to the time I am going to stay in East Bengal. I hope to be able to do so, so long as I think it is necessary, it may even be a life time. I shall try to do whatever I can, in order to bring together the hearts of the Hindus and the Muslims who have so long been together as friends and brothers and sisters. But what I shall be able to do, is more than I can answer. Man can but make an attempt. Success can be given only by God," said Mahatma Gandhi in an interview to the United Press representative staying with Gandhiji.

To the same correspondent's question "Here is one serious difficulty. Canal water will dry up shortly. The people will not then be able to leave these villages even if they want to do so. Would you ask them to stay or want them to leave at once?"

Mahatma Gandhi replied: "I have said at meetings that I have addressed in these parts of the country, that if the people are brave, whether they are few or many, they should not leave their homes whatever the risk. And this I say irrespective of military or police protection. It is beneath the dignity of free men or those wanting to be free, to seek such protection. Surely during the past few days much has happened to encourage the people to remain in their homes."

Following three hours' discussion in presence of Mahatma Gandhi, prominent representatives of Hindus and Muslims at a closed door conference held on Friday

front of the Ramgang Dak Bungalow, agreed to peace committees in village unions with equal representation of both communities for the restoration of brotherly feelings and rehabilitation of those who had left their homes. These committees, which will be presided over by Government officers, will be responsible for the maintenance of peace in their respective areas. Mr. Shams-ud-Din Ahmed, Minister for Labour, Commerce and Industries, presided. Hindus, headed by Mr. Manoranjan Choudhury, Secretary of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha and an inhabitant of the district, wanted fulfilment of certain conditions.

Opening the conference, Mr. Shams-ud-Din Ahmed appealed to the audience to forgive and forget the past and try to make Gandhiji's mission a success.

Consenting to the formation of the committees Mahatma Gandhi said that the committee's decisions, should be accepted by Government if they called themselves a people's government. He again stressed the need for one honest Muslim and one honest Hindu to stand as sureties for the protection of the villagers and these two men must be prepared to die if necessary. Even if they died, the result would be good, he added.

Mr. P. N. Rajbhoj, Secretary of the All-India Schedule Castes Federation, and Mr. Satish Chandra Das Gupta, founder of the Khadi Pratisthan and organiser of Mahatma Gandhi's East Bengal tour were among those present.

Mahatma Gandhi returned to Srirampore shortly before midnight.

"My new plan does contemplate the necessity of lasting peace, of sincere co-operation of the Muslim League in establishing friendly relations between the two communities, irrespective of the merits or otherwise of Pakistan," said Mahatma Gandhi replying to a question put by a correspondent.

The correspondent had asked him: "How do you think lasting peace can be achieved by your new plan unless the Muslim League itself, which presumably guides the majority of the Muslim intelligentsia sincerely co-operates in creating such an atmosphere by their words and deeds."

Another question asked was as to what guarantee was to be sought in the personal courage of individuals, since everything else depended on it. "There is no such safety as you imagine in numbers in the imagined conditions," was his reply.

"Migration is no remedy whilst there is a hope of co-operation. It all becomes a necessity when the majority party wishes it, if a clash is to be avoided. All this is a matter of mutual adjustment, not of arbitrary action. The one thing needful is that barbarities must cease, if we are to survive as a nation or two or many free nations, living in friendly co-operation," said Gandhi replying to the question. "Should you not advise people of those areas where one or two houses are of Hindus and the rest are Muslims to migrate to areas inside the district where Hindus are comparatively in larger numbers so that in case of emergencies they can put up some sort of resistance, if they do not believe in non-violence?"

The previous evening when Gandhiji was having a walk in paddy fields at dusk sound of temple bells and conch shells could be distinctly heard. An old man of the village told Gandhiji that it was for first time after about two months that they heard sound of temple bells and conch shells ringing in the village temples. During that interval people could not even ring their temple bells for fear of members of the majority community and many had to say only their silent prayers. With the arrival of Gandhiji, added the old man, that atmosphere had changed and people were becoming courageous and were performing their religious duties without fear of oppression by others.

Muslims were also seen saying prayers at the same time in mosques and houses. This gave the people an impression that the atmosphere of peace which was disturbed by hooligans was returning.

Gandhi told a journalist at his lonely cottage that he (Gandhiji) found himself in the dark not knowing what to do. "I find that 'Ahimsa' does not seem to answer in the matter of Hindu-Muslim relations. This struck me forcibly when I came to learn of events in Noakhali. The reported forcible conversions and distress of Bengali sisters touched me deeply. I could do nothing through pen or speech," said the Mahatma in an impassioned tone.

In reply to a question Gandhiji said, "The question of the exchange of population has never crossed my mind. It is unthinkable and impracticable. Every province belongs as much to the Hindus as to

the Muslims or members of any other faith. It could not be otherwise even if there was full Pakistan as claimed by the League. For me any such thing will spell bankruptcy of Indian wisdom, or statesmanship or both. The logical consequence of any such step is too dreadful to contemplate. Is it not bad that India should be artificially divided into so many religious zones?"

Gandhiji was then asked: "Do you propose to stay in Srirampur indefinitely? Do you think that by confining yourself there you will be able to send your message of peace to the other villages of Noakhali?"

Gandhiji replied: "Of course, I am not burying myself long in Srirampur. I am not ideal here. I am seeing people of the surrounding villages and others. I am studying things and regaining the lost physical strength in the meanwhile. The idea ultimately is to go on foot and when possible and necessary from village to village and induce the evacuees to return. This I can only do when I have seen more things than I know for myself. It is clear to me that my mere words carry little weight. Distrust has gone too deep for exhortation".

"A report has it that you find yourself in the dark about the future. If the report is true, can you say why it is so. When did darkness come over you? Do you see any release from it?" was the next question.

Gandhiji replied: "I am afraid that the report is substantially correct. Outside circumstances have never overwhelmed me. The reason for the present

Gandhi is India

darkness lies within me. I find that Ahimsa does not seem to answer in the matter of Hindu-Muslim relations. This struck me forcibly when I came to learn of the events in Noakhali. The reported forcible conversions and distress of Bengali sisters touched me deeply. I could do nothing through pen or speech.

"I argued to myself that I must be on the scene of events and test the soundness of the doctrine which sustained me and made life worth living. Was it the weapon of the weak as it was often held by my critics or was it truly the weapon of the strong? The question arose in me when I had no ready-made solution for the destemper of which Noakhali was such a glaring symptom. And so setting aside all my activities I hastened to Noakhali to find where I stood.

"I know positively that 'Ahimsa' is a perfect instrument. If it did not answer in my hands, the imperfection was in me. My technique was at fault. I could not discover the error from a distance. Hence I came here trying to make the discovery. I must, therefore, own myself in darkness till I see the light. God only knows when it will come. More I cannot say."

In an interview to the special representative of the "Bharati", Calcutta, Mahatma Gandhi in reply to the question: "In view of the unsettled situation is it not better to adopt a migration policy?" said: "I see nothing to warrant such a policy. It is one of despair and therefore to be adopted in rare cases as a last resort."

CHAPTER X

From Quit-India To Constituent Assembly

*Time is the root of all this earth ;
These creatures, who from Time had birth,
Within his bosom at the end
Shall sleep ; Time hath nor enemy nor friend.*

*All we in one long caravan
Are journeying since the world began ;
We know not whither, but we know
Time guideth at the front, and all must go.*

*Like as the wind upon the field
Bows every herb, and all must yield,
So we beneath Time's passing breath
Bow each in turn,—by tears for birth or death ?*

—BHARTRIHARI

[Translated from Sanskrit by Paul Elmer More]

India, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, has covered a great expanse of distance between the Quite-India Resolution of 1942 and the Constituent Assembly of 1946. It was a long caravan of political events which Gandhiji followed, treating the English neither enemies nor friends. Many heroes have laid down their lives without tears in the designs of Father Time on the chessboard of India.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF QUIT-INDIA

MAHATMA GANDHI issued the following statement on the implication of "Quit-India," on April 2, 1942:—

"In terms of non-violence "Quit India" is a healthy, potent cry of the soul. It is not a slogan. It means the end, through means purely truthful and non-violent, of foreign rule and domination. It does not mean the foreigner's destruction, but his willing conversion to Indian life. In this scheme there is no room for hatred of the foreigner. He is a man, even as we are. It is fear of him that gives rise to hatred. Fear gone, there can be no hatred.

"Thus his conversion implies our conversion too. If we cease to be inferiors, he cannot be our superior. His arsenals and his weapons, typified in their extreme in the atom bombs, should have no terror for us. It follows that we may not cover them. We often make the mistake of thinking that we must first have things before we cease to cover them. This tempting argument leads to the prolongation of the agony. Must I do all the evil I can, before I learn to shun it? Is it not enough to know the evil to shun it? If not, we should be sincere enough to admit that we love evil too well to give it up.

"Let us assume that foreign rule is ended. What should the foreigner do? He could hardly be considered free when he was protected by British arms. As a free man, he will discover that it was wrong to possess privileges which the millions of India

could not enjoy. He will live doing his duty as behooves a son of India. He will no longer live at India's expense. On the contrary, he will give India all his talents and by his services render himself indispensable to the land of his adoption.

"If this is true of the European, how much more true must it be for those Anglo-Indians and others who have adopted European manners and customs in order to be classed as Europeans demanding preferential treatment? All such people will find themselves ill at ease, if they expect continuation of the favoured treatment hitherto enjoyed by them. They should rather feel thankful that they will be disburdened of preferential treatment to which they had no right by a known canon of reasoning and which was derogatory to the dignity.

"We have all—rulers and ruled—been living so long in a stifling unnatural atmosphere that we might feel in the beginning that we have lost the lungs for breathing the invigorating zone of freedom. If the reality comes in an orderly, that is a non-violent manner, because the parties feel that it is right, it will be a revealing lesson for the world."

In July 1942, Mahatma Gandhi was physically exhausted, owing to strict dieting and eating less, because of the heat at Sevagram. He lost nearly 10 pounds in weight, hence the weakness. He talked in a low voice, which was not very audible even to those sitting at the farther end of his tiny room. Now that the rains had come here, the temperature had been falling down, and the weather was becoming more pleasant, it

was expected Mahatma Gandhi would soon regain his weight and his physical agility.

In order to lessen the strain on him, the Congress Executive members drove to Sevagram in the after noon to hear M. Gandhi on his reported decision on the "last fight of his life" and the sanction behind his demand of withdrawal of the British Government from India. Though his articles in "Harijan" were interpreted by a few as a toning-down, he appeared to be firm as regards the fundamentals. It was pointed out that in his recent articles, Gandhiji was going into details, which gave one the impression that he was toning down. His talks to the Congress Executive members bore the clearest indication that he was impatient to start his campaign of direct action for the withdrawal of the British power from India.

The Congress Executive discussed in the morning Mr. Rajagopalachari's pro-Pakistan campaign in utter defiance of the Congress A. I. C. C. resolutions and its direct effect on discipline and morale of Congress workers and organisations. It appeared that the Committee had no desire to interfere with individuals' freedom of speech, but since Mr. Rajagopalachari's holding an important and responsible office as the Leader of the Madras Assembly Congress Party and was also a legislator returned on the Congress ticket, giving the Congress High Command a pledge to carry out the Congress policy laid down by the A. I. C. C. and the Congress Working Committee from time to time, the Congress President would write to the Madras leader, requesting him to tender resignation of the offices he had been holding, so that h-

could propagate his views in his individual capacity. The Congress President had sent his draft letter to Gandhiji for information.

Against the background of India's eternal misery and the mounting resentment and bitterness, there occurred the British military reverses in the Far East—Hong Kong, Malay Singapore and Burma—British prestige in Asia dropped to zero. There was panic in India. The Indians were afraid that the British would run from India as they had so recently from Burma. There was no confidence among Indians in England's ability to defend India. The British Government in London realized that an emergency had arisen in India, but it was only after a very healthy prod from President Roosevelt that the British War Cabinet rushed one of its members, Sir Stafford Cripps, out to India to repair the damage. Now whatever the cause of Cripps' failure, the fact is that he failed to repair the damage. The damage, therefore, grew worse. It was as an intuitive, spontaneous reaction to that deterioration of the Indian situation that Gandhi said, "I'm sick of this, the British must go." Then he thought: (friends talked to him) and he said, "That was wrong. I have no right to say that," Gandhi is one of the few big men in the world who is big enough to admit his errors in public. And Gandhi said, "I cannot ask the British to quit India during the war. That would mean making a present of India to the Axis." Gandhi has said from that day to this, "The British and American can stay in India. They can reinforce their armed services in India. They can use India as a base for military operations against the Axis Powers."

Neither Gandhi nor any other Indian leader is asking the British to get off India during the war.

II

THE FORMATION OF I. N. A.

"We should all be proud of I. N. A. men," declared Mahatma Gandhi, addressing a large gathering after prayers in Ramlila grounds in the evening, at New Delhi on April, 1946.

So far, Mahatma Gandhi said, he had refrained from saying anything regarding I. N. A. men either from platform or in the press. This did not mean that he had no regard or love for them. He was always conscious of their sacrifices and all that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose did was for the freedom of India. Ever since his visit to the I. N. A. men in Delhi Cantonment his love for them had increased all the more, he said, and added that they responded to his love with greater love and affection.

Mahatma Gandhi paid glowing tributes to Subhas Chandra Bose and said that he was known to him from his childhood when Deshbandhu C. R. Das was alive. Mr. Bose, said the Mahatma, had instructed his men that outside India they have to fight with arms and ammunition but when they returned to their country, they should follow the instructions of the Indian National Congress.

One thing which impressed him most in the I. N. A. was the unity of different communities, Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Sikhs all worked and fought shoulder to shoulder for the freedom of their

country. He wanted people to learn a lesson from these brave men.

Mahatma Gandhi said that they in India did not want to fight in the manner the I. N. A. did outside India. The aim of a true satyagrahi, he said, was not to kill anybody but to die for the freedom of his country. The I. N. A. men told Mahatma Gandhi that they had fought with arms and swords in the past, but now they had realised that satyagraha was more powerful than the sword and they wanted to become true soldiers of Indian freedom.

III

EN ROUTE TO SIMLA CONFERENCE

SURAT, Broach, Baroda, Rutlam, Bharatpur presented the biggest crowds. At Rutlam they behaved very well by squatting on the platform in a disciplined way. At Bayana, Pyarelal had to give them a mild chiding and ended with the request to pay up and smile and go home. The bigger the crowd, the smaller the collections for the Harijan Funds. The Telugu proverb is that the man who does not pay his fare gets into the boat first. Men who have money to give, often find themselves left behind by men who are eager to reach the Mahatma and some of the people who want to give money insist upon handing it over to Bapu personally. They cannot and the money is lost to the fund. The train was much delayed at every stop by the crowds' invasion and refusal to get down even after dozen whistles have gone. Yet, amazingly enough the driver took them to Delhi in time.

I think in view of the importance of the occasion which took Gandhiji to Simla and the heroic effort of the driver, he should be mentioned in the next year's Honours List. Was not the sister who nursed Gandhiji after the operation in jail in 1923 given a Kaiser-i-Hind Gold Medal?

The railway people were all attention to Gandhiji.

Restaurant Manager: At your service, Sir. What do you want? I can give you anything you want to eat.

Gandhiji: Have you been instructed?

R. M.: I don't require to be instructed. I know my duty, Sir.

Gandhiji: In that case can you feed all the third class passengers?

Before the embarrassed Moses could recover to give a reply, prayers began, in which he took part for the salvation of his soul.

Gandhiji's secretariat this time was very small. Dr. Sushila Nayar was in charge of his self and the food of the personal attendants. Pyarelal was the personal attendant. Pyarelal was disposing of correspondence. Manilal Gandhi appeared to be in charge of sanitation in particular. Parsuram was holding out his hands for collections and when he could not, Gandhiji officiated for him. Dr. Syed Mahmud, who sat in the same compartment, was scribbling something all the time notwithstanding his bad eyesight.

At Delhi and New Delhi stations the crowds were unprecedentedly large. Some irresponsible persons had issued placards that a public reception would be given to Gandhiji and this created a lot of trouble. Great was the disappointment of the crowds when they were told that Gandhiji had got down at Nizamuddin. As befitting the residents of a city, which never lose hope amidst repeated defeats and invasions and resurrections, the crowd vociferously shouted all kinds of things and went away. Only a young fellow, standing on the footboard of the compartment, dropped a significant hint. The man who could disappoint such huge crowds that had been patiently expecting him should remember Section 420, I. P. C. He was evidently a lawyer.

Crowds made lives miserable by getting into the train at Delhi and pursuing us till they got sight of the man they were after. And they got him at last at a wayside station. Ambala beat all the records of the journey, which had been just made slightly tolerable by the falling of a few showers of rain.

At Kalka a Communist-inspired pamphlet screamed: "Down with the deadlock." It should have been put in the hands of Lord Wavell and not of Gandhiji.

IV

MOMENTOUS ANNOUNCEMENT

"WHETHER you like the Cabinet delegation's announcement or not, it is going to be the most momentous one in the history of India and, therefore, requires careful study," declared Mahatma Gandhi

addressing the prayer meeting. He said he did not propose to say anything about the announcement. It would be in their hands in a couple of hours. He asked them not to allow themselves to be led away by prejudice or hearsay but to study the document itself carefully and then form their own opinion from newspapers. Newspapers should be for the study of facts. They should not be allowed to kill the habit of independent thinking. The English language, he warned them, was a difficult medium to master. Even he, after his residence for nearly 20 years among English-speaking people, could not claim to have full mastery over it. They should, therefore, study the document in Hindustani to be able to grasp its full meaning. As men of prayer, it further behoved them to put themselves entirely in the hands of God and pray to him to illumine and purify so as to fit them for understanding the document aright.

The Cabinet Mission's proposals contained the seed to convert "this land of sorrow into one without sorrow and suffering," declared Mahatma Gandhi addressing prayer congregation. He asked the people to examine the proposals not from a parochial standpoint, but that of the whole country. It was open, he said, for the Constituent Assembly to abolish the distinction of Muslims and non-Muslims which the Mission had felt forced to recognise. The provinces were free to reject the very idea of grouping. Subject to these interpretations, Mahatma Gandhi said he would tell them that the Mission had brought forth something of which they had reason to be proud.

Speaking after the evening prayer, Gandhiji referred to the sweet Bhajan sung by Shri Sucheta Devi. The poet says we are inhabitants of the country where there is neither sorrow nor suffering. Where was such a country to be found in this world? He had travelled fairly widely but he had not yet come across such a country so far. The poet had later described the conditions for the attainment of such a state.

It was easy to observe them individually. For one who really and truly was pure at heart, there was no sorrow or suffering. But it was a difficult state, to attain for the millions. Nevertheless he wanted India to be such a country.

He had told them yesterday to examine independently of other peoples' opinions, the statement of the Cabinet delegation when they saw it. They had to examine it not from a parochial standpoint but that of the whole country. They should examine it from the point of view of a country which would be without sorrow or suffering. He would give them his own reactions. He did not want to contradict himself by asking them to follow his ideas if they did not appeal to them. Every one should think for himself and herself. They were to weigh opinions.

He had glanced at the document casually last night. He read it carefully in the morning. It was not an award.

The Mission and the Viceroy had tried to bring the parties together but they could not bring about an agreement. So they had recommended to the country

what in their opinion was worthy of acceptance by the Constituent Assembly. It was open to that body to vary them, reject them or improve upon them.

There was no "take it or leave it" business about their recommendations. If there were restrictions, the Constituent Assembly would not be a sovereign body free to frame a constitution of independence for India. Thus the Mission had suggested for the centre certain subjects. It was open to the Assembly, the majority vote of Muslims and non-Muslims separately, to add to them or even reduce them. It was good that they were not described as Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and other religious communities. That was an advance. What they aimed at was absence of all religious divisions for the whole of India as a political entity. And it was open to the Assembly to abolish the distinction which the Mission had felt forced to recognise. Similarly about grouping. The provinces were free to reject the very idea of grouping. No province could be forced against its will to belong to a group even if the idea of grouping was accepted. He instanced only two things to illustrate his point. He had not exhausted the list of things which seemed to him to be open to objection or improvement.

Subject to the above interpretation which he held was right he would tell them that the Mission had brought forth something of which they have every reason to be proud.

There were some who said the English were incapable of doing the right thing. He did not agree.



Ferry of Fraternity. Mahatma Gandhi, supported by Miss Dula Sarabai and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan with a host of followers crossing a ferry in Bihar.



Bihar Celling. Mahatma Gandhi and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, two noble patriots wandering in the Villages of Bihar.

with them. The Mission and the Viceroy were as God-fearing as they themselves claimed to be. It was beneath their dignity as men to doubt a person before he was proved to be untrue to his word. It would be grievously wrong to doubt in advance everyone of his countrymen.

Whatever the wrong done to India by British rule, if the statement of the Mission was genuine, as he believed it was, in discharge of an obligation they had declared the British owed to India, namely, to get off India's back, it contained the seed to convert this land of sorrow into one without sorrow and suffering.

V

THE EUROPEAN VOTE

Following is the text of the article in the "Harijan":—

"NO less a person than the President of the European Association has exhibited the lion's paw. That seems to be the naked truth. That the Europeans will neither vote nor suffer themselves for election should be a certainty, if a Constituent Assembly worthy of the name is at all to be formed. British power in India has four arms—the official military, the official civil, the unofficial civil and the unofficial military. So when the ruling class speaks of the unofficial Europeans as not being under their control, it is nonsense. The official exists for the unofficial. The former would have no work if the latter did not exist. The British gunboat came in the wake of British commerce. The whole of India is an

occupied country. We have to examine in this light the exploits of the European President. In the intoxication of power he did not seem to have taken the trouble to ascertain whether the state paper has provided for the legal power for his community to vote or be voted for in the proposed Constituent Assembly. For his and his constituent's edification, I have secured the opinion from the leader of the bar in Delhi. It will be found in these columns.

Did the President condescend to inquire of the Mission what his moral and legal position was? Or, did he hold them cheap because he represented the real imperialism which the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy representing British labour were struggling to discard?

It is the straw which shows the way the wind is blowing. This unreasonable performance of the European Association is to my mind the greatest disturbing factor to shake the faith in the reality of the Mission's work. Has the Mission come before its time?

Whether Europeans, who are foreigners and non-nationals, are entitled (i) to vote at or (ii) be candidates for the election of members for the proposed Constituent Assembly, was the question in which Mahatma Gandhi asked Sir Tek Chand to let him have his legal opinion.

Replying to the question, Sir Tek Chand, a former Judge of the Lahore High Court wrote, "My answer to both parts of this question is in the negative." The Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16 sets out

in clear and explicit terms that the object of the Mission's plan is to entrust the task of framing the constitution to Indians alone."

Sir Tek Chand's opinion on the subject has been released to the press by Mr. Pyare Lal. Bakshiji had written to Gandhiji that due to the short time at his disposal he was able to send a summary only, but if Gandhiji would so desire he would send a detailed opinion on the question.

In a letter to Sir Tek Chand Rajkumari Amritkaur, replying on behalf of 'Bapuji', said that Gandhiji read his opinion as soon as it was received and he was immensely pleased and satisfied with it and that what he had written had served the full purpose.

The following is the full text of Sir Tek Chand's reply as released by Mr. Pyare Lal:

"I have been asked to give my opinion on the following question in connection with the constitution-making body proposed to be set up in the statement issued by the Cabinet Delegation and H. E. the Viceroy on the 16th of May, 1946:

"Whether Europeans, who are foreigners and non-nationals, are entitled

- (i) to vote at, or
- (ii) be candidates for the election of members for proposed Constituent Assembly."

"My answer to both parts of this question is in the negative.

"The statement sets out in clear and explicit terms that the purpose and object of the Plan is to entrust the task of framing the constitution to 'Indians' alone:

- (a) Para. 1 of the statement opens with a quotation from the speech delivered in the House of Commons on the 15th of March 1946, by the British Prime Minister, Mr. Attlee, just before the dispatch of the Cabinet Delegation to India, when he said, 'inter alia'.

"What form of Government is to replace the present regime, is for 'India' to decide."

- (b) Para. 3 of the statement says that immediate arrangements should be made whereby 'Indians' may decide the future constitution of 'India'.

- (c) In para. 16, it is stated that the 'object' of the Plan is "to set in motion the machinery whereby a constitution can be settled "by Indians for Indians".

"Having thus set out unequivocally the object and purpose of the Plan, the statement proceeds in paras. 18 and 19 to describe the machinery which is to be brought into being in order to enable a new constitution to be worked out. This body is to consist of a certain specified number of representatives elected by the "Main Communities" in each Provincial Legislature, the "Main Communities" recognised for the purpose being 'General', 'Muslim,' and 'Sikhs' and the "General"

Community including "all persons" who are not Muslims or Sikhs. The question for consideration is whether the expression "all persons" who are not Muslims or Sikhs is limited to Indians only, or it includes Europeans or other foreigners who may be members of the Provincial Legislatures under the constitution of 1935.

"Clearly, para. 18 is to be interpreted not as an isolated or independent clause, but in the context, according to the character and scheme of the document as a whole. The rule of construction is "that language is always used '*secundum subjectam materiam*' and that it must be understood in the sense which best harmonises with the subject-matter." Where words of a general import are used, the real meaning is to be collected "*ex antecedentibus at consequentibus*" that is to say, in reference to that which precedes and follows it. There is, therefore, no doubt that paras. 18 and 19 are subject to paras. 1, 3 and 16 and that the expressions 'all persons' included in the 'General Community' means Indian members of the Provincial Assembly concerned and not foreigners or non-nationals.

That this is so is further clear from para. 22 of the Statement which reads as follows:—

"It will be necessary to negotiate a Treaty between the Union Constituent Assembly and the United Kingdom to provide for certain matters arising out of the transfer of power."

"Surely, it could not have been the intention that the Constituent Assembly, with which the United Kingdom is to negotiate the Treaty, will have as its members, persons who are not Indians, but are nationals of the United Kingdom which is to be the other party to the Treaty".

Mahatma Gandhi declared that the Congress Working Committee after long deliberation decided to fully participate in the constitution-making programme of the British Cabinet Mission.

"They have decided to plunge into it with full force. The result rests on the lap of God and we don't know what he has in store for us." Gandhiji said, adding: "I don't mean to say the committee like the long-term proposals in their entirety."

Mahatma Gandhi referred to newspaper reports of differences between him and the Working Committee members on this matter and said: I must confess I was in darkness for some days and am still seeking light. But I don't want the Working Committee to follow me blindly, without my assigning any reasons. I have told them to go ahead as their wisdom guides them and leave me as there are great men on the Committee."

"Darkness covers my heart at the moment and there is conflict between the heart and the mind but when God resides in our hearts there is no darkness. I pray for light."

Gandhiji said the Working Committee derives its authority and sanction from the people and not from the Viceroy who has the entire armed might of the

British Government behind him. You can overthrow the Committee at any time.

Gandhiji said he "felt small before the Cabinet Ministers when I saw them last evening for I read into clause 19 of their statement a meaning which they didn't intend. It was foolish of me to give it that meaning. They have done the right thing to clarify the point by declaring that delegates to the Constituent Assembly are not required to sign a pledge".

Gandhiji expressed surprise over newspaper reports which he described "substantially correct" of Congress Working Committee decision on the British proposals and said: "I wonder how they get the news. They seem to be experts in the art of fishing out news. They are artists. I don't know how they get their news."

A directive to the people to follow the lead given by the Congress Working Committee in accepting the Cabinet Mission proposal was given by Mahatma Gandhi in it.

Mahatma Gandhi arrived at the A.I.C.C. meeting at 2-15 p.m., on 7th July 1946.

Gandhiji said he had no doubt that if the task was properly approached, they could produce a Swadeshi constitution for India. Some people talked of the British deceiving the people of India and the Congress. He, as a true satyagrahi, did not believe that anyone, not even the British, could deceive true satyagrahis.

Mahatma Gandhi, in his preliminary remarks said that he had no right to speak in the All-India Congress Committee for he was not even a four-anna member of the Congress, but he had been invited to speak by the Working Committee and with their permission he would like to speak on two important subjects, firstly, on the resolution moved by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, seeking ratification of the Working Committee's resolution and, secondly, on the resolution on the Satyagraha in South Africa.

Mahatma Gandhi said: "I have not yet come across a single man who can give perfect expression to all the ideas passing through his mind. It is, therefore, necessary for one to think before he speaks, but on this occasion I have had no time to think about the speech I should make, but in spite of this defect, I have agreed to speak.

"I have read many things in the newspapers about the recent Delhi negotiations. My advice to you is not to take these reports which have very often been highly coloured. I do not, therefore, think that you lost much if you did not read these reports. "

"I said in one of my speeches at Delhi that I saw darkness all round me. I told the Working Committee that as I could not see light. I could not advise them. At the same time, I made it clear to the Working Committee that I was not prepared to advise them to throw out or reject the British Delegation's proposals for summoning a Constituent Assembly, asking the Working Committee to use their judgment and come to their own conclusions. Though I could not see light, I, in my own mind, favoured acceptance

of the proposals, but advised the Working Committee to come to their own decision independently of what I felt or said.

VI

EXERCISE YOUR JUDGMENT

"MY mind to-day is dark as it was in Delhi. Therefore, I will give the same advice to Mr. Jaiprakash Narain. I want you to accept or reject this resolution not because I ask you to accept it or Jaiprakash asks you to reject it, or the Working Committee wants you to accept it, but after giving full and careful thought to the proposition yourself I want you to exercise your own judgment."

Gandhiji continued: "As Satyagrahis we have no right to say that the British are dishonest. How can we say that? There are good and bad people in all countries. We quarrelled among ourselves in the past, and therefore, the British, who came as traders to this country, established themselves as our rulers. We have been fighting them as our rulers, not because the British people are dishonest or bad, but because they have no right to rule over us. They have now told us that they are ready to quit. Our task now is to see how their quitting can be smooth and peaceful.

VII

WHY SHOULD WE BE AFRAID ?

THE proposed Constituent Assembly, I know, is not a free assembly. There are many defects in the scheme, but since we have been fighting for the last so

many years, why should we be afraid of the defects in the Constituent Assembly scheme. We can fight the Constituent Assembly itself, if we find the defects are unremediable. As true Satyagrahis and fighters, we have no right to be afraid of any hardships or difficulties in our way. I was, therefore, surprised when I heard Mr. Jaiprakash Narain saying yesterday that it is dangerous and useless to go into the Constituent Assembly. Supposing we go into the Constituent Assembly and lose, why should we be afraid? A true Satyagrahi never thinks in terms of losing. No one can defeat him. He can never be deceived or cheated by anyone.

"I know that there are many defects in the Constituent Assembly scheme, but then it is in your power to improve it or to bury it. The Constituent Assembly scheme looks like iron ore. We can convert it into pure gold by our own efforts. Whatever loopholes there are can be remedied. My advice to you is to accept the scheme even in spite of its defects, for as Satyagrahis we have no reason to be afraid of anything. I feel that the scheme is capable of improvement and, therefore, my urge is in favour of the acceptance.

"We have asked the British to quit India. This does not mean that we wish to ill-treat them. We want the British to quit honourably and smoothly. The Constituent Assembly proposal is to enable us to make the British quit India. I, therefore, feel that we should accept the Constituent Assembly scheme in spite of its defects, as we are competent to remedy the defects."

VIII

RED LETTERS DAY

UNDER the caption "Ninth August," Mahatma Gandhi wrote in "Harijan":

"Ninth August like 6th April, 13th April and 26th January is a red letter day in the battle of Indian's satyagraha, i.e., truth and non-violence. But to-day, considered in terms of satyagraha, hartals are generally taboo and more specially so, on the coming 9th of August. They would be fitting if 'hartals' are designed to signalize violence.

"Two powerful voices have spoken, one of the president of the Congress, Pandit Nehru and the other of the President of the Socialist Group, Shri Jai Prakash Narain. It is delicate for me to give opinion where these two ardent lovers of their country speak in opposition. But as a satyagrahi, I must overcome the delicacy.

"Jai Prakash Narain is a Congressman. It is an open secret that he was offered a seat on the Working Committee by Panditji naturally under the belief that, whatever views he entertained, he was too honest to be disloyal to the Congress in action. If now, in spite of knowing the Congress President's views to the contrary, he adheres to his own opinion given to the contrary, it would appear to be an act of disloyalty to the Congress. If, therefore, he has not withdrawn, from the false position, I hope, recognizing the aptness of my remarks, he will see the wisdom of retracing his steps.

"The Working Committee rightly or wrongly has taken a step. It has been endorsed by the A. I. C. C. It is up to every Congressman to support the Congress going to the Constituent Assembly by creating the atmosphere suitable for work in that Assembly. This I say even to those who distrust good faith in everything the British do. They may warn the Congress of the dangers they sense. This they were allowed by the presidents to have the fullest latitude to do at the recent A. I. C. C. meeting. Anything in excess of that opposition is surely harmful for the country. I would consider as such the hartal on the 9th August.

"The Congress cannot have the cake and eat it, too. It must be left free, it must be helped to develop freedom through the Constituent Assembly. It will not be a waste of effort to honestly work the assembly for the purpose. The Congress must not kill the hen before it had laid. Then mark the atmosphere in the country. There is senseless disorder as in Ahmedabad and elsewhere. There is a parody of Satyagraha in the show staged by Dr. Ambedkar. In Satyagraha the cause has to be just and clear as well as the means. The cause is certainly vague, even if the means are non-violent. I doubt the wisdom of the sympathetic paralysis of all business in Bombay and elsewhere, assuming the postal strike to be good on merits. Many would seem to have left off all thinking. They seem to take up any nostrum without caring to examine its merits. To call for hartal in this atmosphere is to invite disorder. No disorder is conducive to the growth of independence. Considered from every point of view, I hope that 9th August next will see no hartal in India, but a peaceful, digni-

fied and orderly celebration of the days as advised by the president of the Congress.

IX

1942 STRUGGLE

MAHATMA GANDHI referred to the 1942 struggle and said that many things, which did not form part of the Congress programme such as underground activities, cutting of telegraph wires and removal of rails, happened. In doing these things the people showed great outrage and bravery, but in his opinion this was a wrong way of showing bravery.

Mahatma Gandhi continued, "These things are not going to carry us any nearer our goal. If non-violence is abandoned, it will not take us any further on our road to freedom. We have had violent revolutionary activities in the past, but they have not carried us on our road. True non-violence alone can take us to our goal.

"I agree there has been great awakening in this country, but I am, as a true Satyagrahi, anxious to prevent such awakening resulting in derailment of trains and other forms of violence. I am anxious to utilise all the new awakening to speed our march to freedom. The time for rest and ease has not yet come. We have still to go through difficulties and put up with discomforts. I am sure we are still capable of going through difficulties and therefore I do not see any reason why we should be afraid of going into the Constituent Assembly.

CHAPTER XI

India is Gandhi

*I am Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow,
The Divine Hidden Soul who created the gods,
And who feedest the blessed.*

*I am Lord of the Risers from Death,
Whose Forms are the Lamps in the House of the Dead,
Whose shrine is the Earth.*

*When the sky is illumined with crystal,
Then gladden my road and broaden my path
And clothe me in light.*

*Keep me safe from the Sleeper in Darkness,
When eventide closeth the eyes of the god
And the door by the wall.*

*In the dawn I have opened the Sycamore;
My Form is the form of all women and men,
My spirit is God.*

—FROM THE BOOK OF THE DEAD

[Translated from Egyptian by Robert Hillier]

MAHATMA GANDHI has so much identified himself with the social, spiritual, and psychological genius of his country that it can easily be said that Gandhi is India and India is Gandhi.

I

THE LAND OF GANDHI

THE "Manchester Guardian's" statement that Gandhi "is India to most of his fellow countrymen and to much of the world outside" is supported even by the editor of Muslim League organ, "Dawn". Writing in a recent issue the editor of "Dawn" said: "The present writer once in Baghdad was questioned by a police inspector in broken Esperanto: "Where do you come from?" Answer: "From India". Further question: "Ah, is it not the land where Gandhi is?"

"GANDHIJI'S SPIRIT EVERYWHERE"

A Journalist at Bangalore asked M. Atay, leader of the Turkish press delegation whether he was seeing Gandhiji. He replied that they were seeing Gandhiji's spirit everywhere in India.

II

MOST ORIGINAL MAN

THE "Evening Standard" reviewing Mr. H. N. Brailsford's (eminent Socialist publicist's) new book "Subject India," commenting on the impressions Mr. Brailsford formed of Mr. Gandhi and Pandit Nehru, both of whom he knew personally, says: "Mr. Gandhi struck Mr. Brailsford as "the most original and the most obviously self-moved human being he ever met. Whether Mr. Gandhi spoke or wrote he always seemed to be conducting audible rational dialogue with himself. He reads surprisingly little,

takes almost no interest in science and none at all in aesthetics. He pores over Hindu scriptures but studies gospels as well. Mr. Brailsford adds: 'In his early life Thoreau, Ruskin and Tolstoy influenced Mr. Gandhi, but thereafter his mind turned on its own axis'".

Contrasting Mr. Gandhi and Pandit Nehru, the "Evening Standard" continued: "Pandit Nehru is a complete contrast to Mr. Gandhi with a strained sense of history, high academic honours in natural science and love of English prose and poetry. Pandit Nehru possesses "instinctive dislike of passivity".

The East and West Association, a non-profit organisation, devoted to the promotion of mutual understanding, after publishing booklets on China and Near East and a sympathetic summary of India's history of sociological, ethnographic and religious structure, has also published brief summary of the lives of leaders, including Mr. Gandhi, Pandit Nehru, Maulana Azad, Mr. Jinnah, Khan Abdul Ghaifar Khan, Sardar Patel, Mr. Rajagopalachari and Mrs. Naidu with a further bibliography for readers wishing closer study. The typical objective spirit characterises the pamphlet

Unknown heroes in India worship Gandhi:

A local bank of repute recently sent a form for a specimen signature of Mahatma Gandhi as an anonymous person had deposited Rs. 2,07,000 with it to be paid to Mahatmaji.

III

PERSUASION FOR FORCE

The present war and Mahatma Gandhi's policy

of non-violence formed the main subject of the last lecture delivered by Sir S. Radhakrishnan, as "Kamala Lecturer".

In a tribute to Gandhiji, Sir Sarvapalli expressed the belief that one day the world would look back on him and salute him as one born out of his time, as one who had seen the light in a dark and savage world.

"Our endeavour should be to substitute persuasion for force and reduce the scope for the employment of force as much as possible."

Sir Sarvapalli discussed the failure of the League of Nations in its objective, and said that it did not give up rights acquired by the use of violence and it did not involve the instrument of peaceful change and it had not an effective sanction. It was just like a gun that fired blank cartridges. He emphasized that if the new method of life which the League of Nations stood for was effectively carried out, "we must set up a world organization with a world court and an international police to support it. We cannot attain to the ideal of non-violence at one rush".

Now and then there arose above the common level some rare spirit who reflected more clearly the divine purpose and put it into practice more courageously. "Gandhiji embodies the wounded pride of India and in his satyagraha is reflected the eternal patience of her wisdom. Gandhiji admits that submission to injustice is worse than suffering it. He tells us that we can resist even through an act of non-violence, which is an active force." "If blood is to be shed, let it be our blood. Cultivate the quiet courage

of dying without killing; for man lives freely only by his readiness to die, if need be, at the hands of his brother, never by killing him." "Those few who practise this ought not merely to talk of peace and think of it, but work for it with all their soul. When faced by crisis, they would prefer the four walls of a cell to a seat in the Cabinet or a tent in the battlefield." They would be prepared to stand against a wall to be spat upon, to be stoned, to be shot, Gandhiji to-day is not a free man! You may crucify the body of such a man, but the light in him, which is from the divine flame of truth and love, cannot be put out."

IV

THE PROPHET OF THE PEOPLE

"BELIEVE me or not, Mahatma Gandhi, who is the prophet and inspirer of millions of underfed and semi-literate Indians, is one of the five most influential men in the world."

Thus writes Mr. Richard Busvine, the noted U. S. war correspondent, in the "Sunday Pictorial" (London), giving the impressions of his interview with Mahatma Gandhi in Delhi. Mr. Busvine was in India during Cripps negotiations and secured an interview with Gandhiji.

He writes: "Let me add as a newspaper man who has travelled thousands of miles in this war that Gandhi is the most impressive personality I have ever met".

Giving a report of the interview he says: "In many ways it was an astonishing interview and I

believe I am one of the few newspapermen who have induced Gandhi by cross-examination to define what he really means by odd terms like 'non-co-operation,' 'non-violence', that we are all reading about."

Drawing his own conclusions of Mahatma Gandhi's views on War, Non-violence etc., Mr. Busvine says: "There is no hope at all of getting him to take a share in a Government of India that is determined to organize that great nation to use arms against its enemies."

V

THE CULT OF SWORD

AS for Master Tara Singh he had brief humorous conversation with Gandhiji as they met each other on the way to the Viceroy's House. Gandhiji remarked: "Your 'Kirpan' has grown longer" Master Tara Singh retorted: "But it will not be used against those who believe in non-violence."

VI

LOVE OF COURAGE

"I would be less than loyal to the Congress organization if I did not warn them (the people of the Tamil Nad) against losing the valuable services which no one can shoulder as Rajaji can at the present moment," writes Mahatma Gandhi in a signed article in the "Harijan".

After refuting the suggestion that those who wanted to approach him during his present tour of South India were prevented from doing so, Mahatma

Gandhi says, that Mr. Rajagopalachari was one of his oldest friends and was known to be the best exponent in word and deed of all he (Mahatma Gandhi) stood for.

Mahatma Gandhi continues: "That in 1940 he differed from me I know. All honour for the boldness with which he publicly avowed the difference. He is a great social reformer, never afraid to act according to his belief. His political wisdom and integrity are beyond question. I was, therefore, pained to find a clique against him. It is a clique that evidently counts in the official Congress in Madras. But the masses are devoted to Rajaji. I am neither vain nor foolish enough to feel that I could have had the huge public demonstrations, all along the route of the pilgrimage, if he had no influence with the masses in Tamil Nad. Congressmen in South will act as they think best. But I would be less than loyal to the organization, if I did not warn them against losing the valuable service which no one can shoulder as Rajaji can at the present moment."

VII

VICTIM OF A CRUEL CUSTOM

GANDHI'S early life and education followed the traditional lines of Hindu custom. At the age of thirteen, wedded a wife of his own age, and began at once to cohabit with her while still living as a dependant in his father's house. He has noted this interruption of his schooling and deplored the cruelty of the custom.

—J. G. PRATT

AFTER his father's death he left his wife and child behind in his mother's house and sailed from Bombay in 1887, to spend the next four years as a student at the Bar in London. Painfully nervous, shy, and tongue-tied, he nevertheless showed unusual courage and self-control, and faithfully kept the vows 'which his mother had exacted from him,' of chastity and of abstinence from meat and from liquor. He lived carefully within his means; spent his spare time in desultory reading of religious books and vegetarian literature; and became a keen propagandist of the fleshless diet which he practised. On returning to India in 1891 he began to practise as a barrister in Bombay, but soon found himself compelled by poverty to return to his native province to work up a local practice.

—J. G. PRATT

VIII

FIRST TUSSEL WITH BUREAUCRACY

IT was not long before he experienced a shock which altered the whole course of his life. He was persuaded to visit a British official for the purpose of interceding on behalf of his brother, who had somehow got into trouble with the authorities. He admits that he went unwillingly and against his better judgment, but he persisted in continuing to talk and argue his request had met with a definite refusal. There were probably faults of temper and of judgment on both sides, but when Mr. Gandhi persisted in refusing to take his leave, the British official called in an attendant and had him put out of the office. The

young barrister's dignity was cruelly offended, and he was with difficulty persuaded to refrain from instituting legal proceedings. But he was so chagrined and so disgusted with the conditions of life in Kathiawar that he gladly accepted a commission to proceed to South Africa to take charge of an important suit between two wealthy Indian merchants in Durban and Pretoria.

—J. G. PRATT

IX

THE COOLIE LAWYER

"RICH and poor, cultured and uneducated, were all classed together as 'coolies'. Mr. Gandhi was a 'coolie'. Rich merchants were 'coolies'. All Indians were 'coolies', just as in China all Europeans were 'foreign devils'".

—SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND

X

SANCTUM SANCTORUM

IT was late in December, 1907, when I saw Mr. Gandhi for the first time. Rumour had been very busy with his name. The Passive Resistance movement had come into prominence. Some small stir had been made in the newspapers by the imprisonment of a Pundit, and in one way or another, Mr. Gandhi's name had been bandied from lip to lip. One evening, a friend raised the Asiatic Question at the supper-table, and as we were comparatively new to Johannesburg, although not new to the country, he told us what he thought of the Indians. His account was so strange and so completely opposed to all our previous experi-

ence, that it made us curious, and more than anything else decided me to interview the leader.

The office, at the corner of Rissik and Anderson Streets, I found to be like other offices. It was intended for work and not for show. The windows and door were adorned with the name of the occupant with the denomination of Attorney attached to it. The first room was given up to a lady-typist; the second, into which I was ushered, was SANCTUM SANCTORUM.

J. J. DOKE

XI

PERIOD OF APPRENTICESHIP

HIS political career in South Africa lasted for twenty years. It was a period of apprenticeship and preparation for the work in the wider field of India. It was in South Africa that he perfected the technique of his special methods of political controversy and laid the foundations of his future renown in the dual role of ascetic saint and national champion. He organized and directed an Indian Congress in Natal with its own newspaper for the defence of the political and civic rights of Indians. His persistent advocacy compelled the attention not only of the local government, but also of the Governments in India and Great Britain to the Indian claims and grievances in the matters of franchise and discriminatory taxation. In the local courts of law he was the constant defender of the rights of Indian settlers. With all this he strove in various ways to increase the self-

respect of the Indian community and their consideration among their neighbours. In times of trouble, during and after the Boer War, he persuaded them to come forward as loyal citizens of the Empire and to render service in ambulance battalions. In 1904 he did fine work in organizing relief measures during an epidemic of plague. To these activities he devoted unstintingly his time and most of the earnings of a lucrative professional practice.

—J. G. PRATT

XII

FIRST GREAT DEMONSTRATION

AT the time when Europe, Asia and Africa were being drawn as never before into a tri-partite, bewildered, chaotic contract India gave this man to Africa that there he might make him first great demonstration against (or perhaps it would be true to say with) Europe.

—GERALD HEARD

XIII

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

HAVING travelled in India, I had almost unconsciously selected some typical face and form as likely to confront me, probably a tall and stately figure, and a bold, masterful face, in harmony with the influence which he seemed to exert in Johannesburg. Perhaps a bearing haughty and aggressive. Instead of this, to

my surprise, a small, lithe, spare figure stood before me, and a refined, earnest face looked into mine. The skin was dark, the eyes dark, but the smile which lighted up the face, and that direct fearless glance, simply took one's heart by storm. I judged him to be of some thirty-eight years of age, which proved correct. But the strain of his work showed its traces in the sprinkling of silver hair on his head. He spoke English perfectly, and was evidently a man of great culture.

Asking me to be seated, he listened to an explanation of my visit, noting the points raised with a nod of the head and a quick "Yes", until I had done. Then he went straight to the mark. Using his fingers to emphasize his thoughts, he gave the most luminous statement of the Asiatic position, in a few crisp sentences, that I have ever heard. I was anxious to know what the religious elements in the struggle were, and he gave them with convincing clearness, explaining patiently every little involved issue, and satisfying himself that I understood each before dealing with the next. Once, when he paused longer than usual, to see whether I had grasped the thought or had only assented for the sake of courtesy, I closed my note-book, thinking he had finished. "Don't close it," he said, "the chief point is yet to come".

There was a quiet assured strength about him, a greatness of heart, a transparent honesty, that attracted me at once to the Indian leader. We parted friends.

XIV

SELF-DETACHMENT

IT is in the possession of the virtue of detachment from self that, I suggest, lies the source of Gandhi's authority.

C. E. M. JOAD

XV

MAKING OF THE MAHATMA

MR. GANDHI had reached the age of forty-five when his victory in South Africa made him known in three continents. He had by then attained his full development after a long and rigorous self-discipline. To education in the formal sense his debt was small. His habit from quite an early period of his life has been to rely on what he describes as the inner light or the inner vision for the solution of mental and spiritual problems. His interpretation of his own experiences had led him to identify the inner voice of his subconscious judgment with divine inspiration and guidance and this manner of thinking has given him a supreme self-confidence which has sometimes been to him a tower of strength and sometimes a snare and a pitfall. He distrusted book knowledge so his friend Mrs. Polak tells us and seemed to think that it obscured if it did not destroy the capacity to perceive the inner vision. Of history and economics he has made no serious study. His ideas of history are such as might be derived from the school-books of fifty years ago. 'It is a record', he says, 'of the wars of the world, a record of the interruptions of the course of Nature'.

IT was at Pretoria during his first year in Africa that he became immersed in religious studies, and he has gratefully recorded that he was led to them by the example of little group of Christian Evangelists who befriended him on his first arrival and admitted him into their frequent meetings for prayer and discussion. But their hopes of winning him as a convert to Christianity were doomed to frustration. During his stay in Bombay he had fallen under the influence of a learned and devout Hindu, Raychandbhai, who combined an inward life of absorption in holy pursuits with the outward life of a busy merchant prince. This man became Mr. Gandhi's religious guide and teacher and is mentioned by him along with Ruskin and Tolstoy as one of the great formative influences of his life. Under his guidance he studied the Hindu scriptures and the Bhagwadgita which afterwards became the main sustenance of his spiritual life. He applied himself to the comparative study of religions. He "read Sale's Koran and a whole library of books of Christian theology. He was captivated by the teaching of Christ and throughout his life has found inspiration in the Sermon on the Mount; but he could not accept the Christian theology nor the claim of Christianity to be the final revelation of religious truth. He made up his mind that a Hindu must find truth in the heart of the religion of his own country.

J. G. PRATT

XVI

PROPHET OF PACIFISM

MAHATMA GANDHI is the greatest living exponent of successful pacifism.

—LAURENCE HONSMAN

XVII

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

THERE is the trial in the "B" Criminal Court, a great mass of excited Asiatics crushed in at the door, and spread to a great crowd outside. The cynical Magistrate, with his face flushed, presided at the Bench; the horseshoe of legal offices below.

Then I can see again that spare, lithe form responding to the call, "Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, and taking the prisoner's place with alacrity to receive a sentence of "two months' imprisonment" for the sake of his suffering people. Just prior to this, he had addressed these words to the hundreds of Asiatics who had gathered at the Mosque:..... "No matter what may be said, I will always repeat that it is a struggle for religious liberty. By religion, I do not mean formal religion, or customary religion, but that religion which underlies all religions, which brings us face to face with our Maker. If you cease to be men, if, on taking a deliberate vow, you break that vow, in order that you may remain in the Transvaal without physical inconvenience, you undoubtedly forsake God. To repeat again the words of the Jew of Nazareth, those who would follow God have to leave the world, and I call upon my countrymen, in this particular instance, to leave the world and cling to God, as a child clings to its mother's breast." Notable and brave words.

—JOSEPH J. DOKE

· XVIII

FOOLS OF GOD

LONG before Gandhi's time there were "Fools of God" in India.....Judged by the standard of the goldsmith the lotus was valueless. Our familiar measures may often prove equally deceptive when human wisdom sits in judgment over the Fools of God."

—REGINALD REYNOLDS

XIX

THE COURAGEOUS CREW

GANDHI'S wife, Kasturba, whom he married at the age of twelve, has ever since shared her husband's life of toil and privations with admirable loyalty. She is a little woman with a slight, almost childish, figure; her face, with its serious, almost austere, expression, is the index of a strong and yet kindly soul. She, like Gandhi, wears only hand-woven garments, of simple red-bordered khaddar; she too wanders like her husband through the villages and towns of India, working in conjunction with many of her young women disciples for the introduction of the hand-loom for the freeing of the pariahs.

In South Africa, too, she was a courageous comrade to her husband in his struggles: when the Indians in the Transvaal, in response to Gandhi's appeal, voluntarily went to prison in crowds, she was one of the first to go and spent three months there. At the time when her sons were arrested for participating in the nationalist movement, and she was

overwhelmed with expressions of sympathy from all parts of the empire, she circulated a letter of thanks in which she said: "Only two of my sons are in prison, while thousands of the sons of our Indian mothers are there. I have no right to shed tears of grief when so many young men have been torn from their beloved mothers."

The sons of the Mahatma are also their father's faithful disciples: in the speech of the young Devandas Gandhi before his judge could be heard the voice of the Mahatma. When he was charged with having taken part in the movement against English rule, he cried: "I declare that I am guilty in the sense of the charge. Whatever I have said or done was deliberate; I was fully conscious of my responsibility and I beg for the maximum legal penalty."

XX

YOUTHFUL PROPHET

GANDHI is the great soul, the Mahatma of our day, the youthful prophet of a redeemed humanity, a regenerated society, of a world yet to be born.

—STEPHEN HOBHONSE

XXI

THE MAHATMA

Mr. GANDHI had reached the age of forty-five when his victory in South Africa made him known in three continents. He had by then attained his full development after a long and rigorous

self-discipline. To education in the formal sense his debt was small. His habit from quite an early period of his life has been to rely on what he describes as the inner light or the inner vision for the solution of mental and spiritual problems. His interpretation of his own experiences had led him to identify the inner voice of his sub-conscious judgment with divine inspiration and guidance, and this manner of thinking has given him a supreme self-confidence which has sometimes been to him a tower of strength and sometimes a snare and a pitfall.

—J. G. PRATT

XXII

THE GOLDEN AGE

IT was at this early period that he read and was overwhelmingly impressed by Tolstoy's book, *The Kingdom of God Is Within You*. In its thesis that the use of violence or force in resistance to evil is contrary to the teaching of Christ he found a restatement of the Hindu doctrine of Ahimsa or non-violence, which dominated all his future thought and action. He made an intensive study of Tolstoy and saturated himself with the Tolstoyan ideas and attitude towards life and society. It was in Tolstoy that he found the primitive pre-scientific notions of a state of nature—a Golden Age of simplicity and innocence which was nature's plan for human life. Only by a return to nature with the peasant's simple life of toil and poverty can man find salvation. Modern civilization has gone fatally astray because the complexities which come with man's increasing knowledge and command

of natural forces involve a departure from nature's plan. Machines and railways are violations of nature's law, that man should labour with his hands and use his feet for locomotion. Hospitals are at best necessary evils in a society which has forgotten that the healing powers of nature are the true remedy for all diseases. He cannot think of man's mind with its inventions and its conquests as itself a part of nature. For his mind is of the protomedieval type, to which knowledge is in a sense forbidden fruit and science is still a closed book. He took over also the Tolstoyan attitude towards the established Government and its institutions—its law courts and judges and armies and police. These were not required under the Communistic conditions of the Golden Age and are now the vicious accompaniment of a corrupted social system. To the ardent nationalist in Mr. Gandhi these conclusions seemed self-evident truths when applied to the alien Government of his own country.

J. G. PRATT

XXIII

PRISON OF FLESH

AS the burden of his public work increased, he developed the conviction that a life of public service demands complete renunciation of all sensuous gratification. He stripped himself of superfluities and made it his ideal to live 'like a bare spirit in its low prison of flesh'. At the age of 37, after long searchings of conscience, he finally bound himself to lifelong celibacy. He developed by his austerities a strength

of will and a power of self-control and self-possession which in his political life enabled him often to dominate the counsels of men to whom he was intellectually inferior. He worked out for himself a philosophy of life in which truth is the supreme good, of which all other forms of good are emanations, and his search for truth led him to a pure and lofty idealism which eschews violence and hatred and makes love and non-violence the laws of conduct.

J. G. PRATT

XXIV

DYNAMIC SPIRITUALISM

"GANDHIJI'S conception of non-violence is not defeatism, it is scarcely even a pacifism as that word has now come to be interpreted in England. Gandhiji is dynamic and not static: he represents and guides to a very great extent the inchoate ideas and aspirations of India's submerged and still static millions: and for their souls the race between materialism and spiritualism is on. Gandhi is the unrelenting enemy of power, wealth, aggression and industrialisation: he is the greatest living exponent of the creed of love.

"I believe, as I have said, that his doctrine of non-violence might appeal, for India's cause at least even to the world-war strategist. I would add how strangely it seems that Christians, and in particular Christian ministership-serving in their churches and repeating the words. "Blest are peace-makers: for they shall be called the Children of God," can view with indifference and even approval the incarceration of Gandhi by the Pilates of today."

LIONEL FIELDEN

XXV

LAST YEARS IN AFRICA

HIS last years in Africa were filled with a struggle against the Transvaal and Union Government for the repeal of the Asiatic Act, under which Indians were subjected to humiliation, restrictions and disabilities. During eight years he organized and led a campaign of passive resistance against the provisions of the Act. He was several times imprisoned, and he taught his followers to welcome and court imprisonment. From this time on, the poor man's champion made the poor man's dress his only wear. Lord Hardinge in a public speech in India in December 1913 avowed his deep and burning sympathy with the Indians in what he regarded as their righteous struggle. In the end, after a mass mobilization of miners on strike to disobey the migration law, the battle was won. The Asiatic Act was repealed on the eve of the Great War, and the tax on Indian labourers was abolished.

J. G. PRATT

XXVI

RADICAL INCONSISTENCIES

HIS public character is now and will remain a matter of endless controversy between the two extremes of enthusiastic praise and wholesale condemnation. Even his admirers have been perplexed by radical inconsistencies in his thought and action. The teacher of non-violence became a recruiting officer and complained that his people had been deprived

of the weapons of war. He seems to be an amalgam of several distinct elements which coexist on separate planes and have never grown together into one consistent whole—the mystic and the nationalist—the champion of freedom and the dictator—the devotee of truth and the political propagandist—the social reformer and the Hindu patriot. It became his ruling passion to deliver his country from modern civilization and towards that end the first step was to get rid of British rule. He came to think of it as having been from first to last an unmixed evil.

—J. G. PRATT

XXVII

RETURN TO INDIA

AFTER his return to India in 1915 Mr. Gandhi established his settlement near Ahmedabad as a seminary for the propagation of his social and political ideas. He had promised Gokhale that he would spend a year in travel and observation before beginning to take any active part in politics. But even in this first year he began to be embarrassed by the homage of enthusiastic crowds. Before two years had passed Vishnuland had recognized another Avatar and the title of Mahatma, or Great Soul, came into general use.

—J. G. PRATT

XXVIII

HALF-OPEN DOORS

"HE began by pushing at doors which were

already half-open. The abolition of the system of indentured labour was part of the settled policy of Government and was put into effect in 1917 a few months after Mr. Gandhi began to demand it from public platforms. He then took up the grievances of tenants in the North Bihar district of Champaran, where the collapse of the indigo industry had led to agrarian disputes. In the end a compromise was reached and embodied in legislation."

—J. G. PRATT

XXIX

THE FORE-RUNNER OF GANDHI

AT the beginning of the twentieth century the people of Bengal, under the leadership of the great Indian thinker and politician, Aurobindo Ghose, carried out a movement which has many claims to be called the fore-runner of Gandhi's non-co-operation. The English bureaucracy intended to introduce a new administrative division of districts which was a menace to interests important to the people of Bengal. In answer to this measure the Bengalis decided, on the advice of Aurobindo Ghose, to proclaim to boycott of all British goods and to cease all co-operation with the English authorities. To this period belong Rabindranath Tagore's first songs of freedom, in which he exhorts his fellow-citizens to devote their whole strength, lives, and property to the freeing of their native land. The Bengalis replied enthusiastically to the appeal of their poet and their political leader. In all parts of the province men and women cast off their clothes of English manufacture and burnt them on

great bonfires; at the same time almost all the native officials retired from their posts and boycotted the British administrative authorities.

"Aurobindo Ghose, like Gandhi after him, was convinced that India should educate her children in the spirit of her own culture and make a clean sweep of the half-education which had previously been in force. But so long as people were unfed and unclothed, they could not be expected to take sufficient interest in spiritual training. For this reason Aurobindo Ghose demanded financial self-administration for India, so that the Indian people could relieve the universal need from their own resources. When England proved inclined to grant this financial autonomy, Aurobindo turned against the British Government altogether, but wished to avoid all use of violence in the struggle. Therefore, he asked the people to develop their own moral fitness for independence by mutual support and help; and he at the same time by passive resistance to the English. India must encourage her industry and agriculture from her own resources instead of expecting help from her foreign overlords. Because England refused India economic protection by means of customs duties, the people, according to Aurobindo Ghose, must provide protection for themselves by the boycott of English goods. The nation should make every effort to crush the devastating epidemics by clearing the jungles, laying out new roads, and abolishing the unhygienic conditions in the villages and towns, to build as large as possible of new Indian schools in order to increase the spiritual and moral strength of the young, and to prepare the people systematically for political and economic independence."

"This movement in Bengal did not long preserve its peaceful character. The leadership of the excited masses soon slipped from the hands of Aurobindo Ghose into those of other politicians who preached armed rebellion. Soon a bloody revolt occurred, which was quickly crushed by the English.

XXX

COURAGE TO RESIST

Mr. GANDHI'S steady persistence in his chosen way has given me, among millions of others, courage to resist, by the greatest of all resistances, unconquerable, unwavering personal determination, the growth of tyranny in the world.

—PEARL 'S. BUCK

XXXI

THE TALISMAN

HE began his Indian political career with the firm belief founded on his South African experience that in his new weapon of Satyagraha, truth-force or soul-force or passive resistance the word is packed with many meanings—he had a talisman with power to solve every difficulty and redress every grievance. He proclaimed the new evangel with apostolic fervour. "Satyagraha has presented the rising generation with a new hope, an open road and an infallible remedy most ills of life. It has armed that generation with an indestructible and matchless force which any one may wield with impunity.

—J. G. PRATT

XXXII

THE LIVING SYMBOL

GANDHI is not the only living symbol of that counter pole to modern aggressive expansionism...but Gandhi is the most visible, most spectacular, most single-minded and most pure-hearted symbol.

—C. H. KEYSERLING

XXXIII

A SHRIMP OF A FELLOW

A shrimp of a fellow, as thin as a lathe. His face lacks all beauty, and is peaky and sickly. He has a curious-shaped skull with very prominent ears and short-cropped hair slightly grey over the temples. Great brown eyes glow under his deeply furrowed brow; his delicate, thin upper lip is half concealed by a little moustache. His frail, slight body has become so weakened and exhausted by privation and sickness that, when he wants to address the people, he has to be placed on a high chair in the midst of the crowd that throngs about him; in his sitting position, feeble as a decrepit old man, he speaks to his disciples.

—MR. LLOYD, THE ENGLISH OFFICIAL

XXXIV

PASSIONLESS ORATOR

HIS speech is passionless, quiet, and measured. For this man, who has succeeded in revolutionizing the whole of India, like Lenin, that other great

appeared before any angry, excited crowd and checked by a few words a dangerous outbreak. "This shrimp as thin as a lith carries three hundred and twenty million men with him. A nod, a word from him is a command; he is their God."

—MR. LLOYD

XXXVIII

LUMINOUS BEACON

WE are fortunate and should be grateful that fate has bestowed upon us so luminous a contemporary—a beacon to the generations to come.

—ALBERT EINSTEIN

XXXIX

THE NOVELTY OF EXPERIMENT

IN the following year Mr. Gandhi turned his attention to the Kaira district in his own province of Gujarat. There had been a partial failure of the rains over the whole district, and in accordance with the existing law and custom the revenue authorities had made estimates of the outturn of the crops for the purpose of determining the degree of relief to be allowed to the cultivators. Political organizations headed by Mr. Gandhi challenged the estimates as harsh and the relief as inadequate. The real difficulty here was to get any agreed basis of admitted facts to which principles of settlement could be applied. There were honest but wide differences of opinion on both sides, which could not be reconciled. To Mr. Gandhi it was as 'clear as day-light' that the Government were harsh and tyrannical, and he encouraged

the peasants to enter on a campaign of resistance. The struggle dragged on for several months, but ended in the recovery of practically the full demand which had been billed for collection. Passive resistance in this case failed to attain its avowed ends, but the novelty of the experiment, conducted as it was under the concentrated limelight of the Bombay press, gave an immense advertisement to Mr. Gandhi and his teaching.

—J. G. PRATT

XL

THE INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE

"I should, therefore, celebrate Mr. Gandhi's the man who could mix the spiritual with the temporal, and could be at the same time true to both. I should also celebrate the man who could be a bridge between the East and the West, and thereby could render one of the greatest services which it is possible to render to the cause of international understanding".

—ERNEST BARKER

XLI

THE COLOSSAL POWER

"WHEREIN lies the colossal power of Gandhis personality?" Percival Landon asserts that his nature has something almost divine in it, and that his voice has a note of detachment, remote and immaterial, which lends uncanny force to his speech.

XLII

INDEFINABLE SUGGESTION

GANDHI'S whole manner irresistibly diffuses

harmony, "a certain indefinable suggestion of saintliness".

—GILBERT MURRAY

XLIII

IN A BRITISH COURT

A report in papers of the proceedings against Gandhi describes the entrance of the accused into court: "The Mahatma came into the room with a light step, and his smile shone on the whole assembly. He displayed an exalted gaiety, even a festive joy, as if he were coming not to his trial but to a wedding."

XLIV

VOLUNTARY STARVATION

HE drinks no alcohol, tea or coffee; he sleeps on a piece of coarse woven cloth spread on the bare floor of his room, with a bundle of khaddar or books for a pillow. Whenever possible he sleeps in the open air, preferably wrapped in a cloth on the bare earth.

"So long as three millions of people" he says, "have to be satisfied with one meal a day, we have no right to anything more. It is our duty to undergo voluntary starvation if necessary in order that all the poor may be nursed, fed, and clothed....."

XLV

THE SOCIAL SCIENTIST

HE is a social scientist because he follows social

truth by the scientific method of observation, intuitional and intellectual hypothesis, and experimental text.

RICHARD B. GRIGG

XLVI

WHAT FOREIGNERS FEAR

Mr. GANDHI, you are preaching to the converted. It is not the vices of Indians that Europeans in this country fear but their virtues.

—LIONAL CURTIS

XLVII

TO THE FOREIGNERS

"IF we could see with our own eyes the shameful treatment meted out to the worker on the coffee, tea, and cocoa plantations in India, then we would freely renounce for ever the enjoyment of these beverages. In fact, if we troubled about the preparation of our foodstuffs as a whole, we should feel reluctance in eating ninety-ninths of them."

—MAHATMA GANDHI

XLVIII

GANDHI AND TOLSTOI

IT is known, that the reading of Tolstoi's writings had a powerful influence on Gandhi. Thus, for example, the Russian novelist, in the epilogue to the *Kreutzer Sonata*, declared like Mahatma Gandhi that he knew "no other sin" which involved consequences as frightful as "sensual love." In this novel he tried

to prove that "all evil results solely from men and women using each other as instruments of pleasure; from this comes the hostility between man and woman."

XLIX

GANDHI AND CHIANG

"AMONG the greatest men on the public stage of the world to-day are two Asiatics—Gandhi and Chiang Kai Shek, both moving immense masses of men to a destiny which in essence is one with the high Christian ideal which the West has received but no longer seriously practises."

—RT. HON. J. C. SMUTS

L

GANDHI AND WOLLMAN

I also discovered that Gandhi knew very little about another man whom he very much resembled in spirit, John Wollman, the most remarkable and the most saintly of all the Quakers of the eighteenth century and a striking example of "soul-force."

—REFUS M. JONE

LI

GANDHI'S FOREIGN FAVOURITE

IT is very characteristic that Gandhi employed his frequent periods of imprisonment almost exclusively in completing his literary education, and filled his involuntary leisure with reading. Books must have helped him over all the sufferings of his

imprisonment; he himself tells us how the works of Carlyle, Ben Jonson, Walter Scott, and Lord Bacon, the writings of Tolstoi, Emerson, Thoreau, and Ruskin, together with the sacred books of India, especially the Bhagavadgita, took the place of the customary society of his friends, and shortened the endless hours of loneliness. "In prison I read many of these books for the first time. Usually I began in the morning with the study of the Gita, devoted the middle of the day to the Koran, and in the evenings read the Bible with a Chinese Christian."

LII

CHRIST AND SATYAGRAHA

"THIS way of Satyagraha, it may be noted, comes very close to the way of Christ. Mahatma Gandhi has claimed Jesus Christ as "the prince of satyagrahis."

—JACK C. WINSLOW

LIII

JAKOB BOHME

GANDHI had felt a profound leaning towards Christianity since his youth and regarded Jesus as one of the greatest teachers of all times. The time of his confinement in Yervoda gaol was spent mainly in the study of the Mahabharata, which made a particularly profound impression on him in the original text; in addition, he also occupied himself with Mohammedan writings, particularly accounts of the life and fate of the Prophet and his companions. Sometimes he used also to read there one or other work of European

literature, including the writings of the German mystic, Jakob Bohme. Gandhi later referred to this thinker with special emphasis, and in one of his lectures he quoted several sayings of Jakob Bohme.

LIV

KAGAWA AND SCHWEITZER

"Mr. Gandhi ranks with Kagawa and Schweitzer, and he would himself acknowledge that to some extent he draws his inspiration from the same source as they. Here his life and work are clearly in accord with the spirit of Him who was described as the friend of publicans and sinners".

—H. G. WOOD

Sometimes he used also to read there one or other work of European literature, including the writings of the German mystic, Jakob Bohme. Gandhi later referred to this thinker with special emphasis, and in one of his lectures he quoted several sayings of Jakob Bohme.

LV

FOREIGN INFLUENCES

IN addition to his legal studies Gandhi also devoted himself, partly owing to the influence of theosophists with whom he had become friendly, to reading religious writings. It was then that he read for the first time the Bhagavadgita. He also made the personal acquaintance of the theosophists, Madam Blavatskji and Mrs. Beasant and of their writings. He had also to thank one of his London friends for intro-

ducing him to Christianity, and he began at this time to study the Bible.

Gandhi once declared that three moderns had made a profound impression on him and captured his soul: Rajachandra by his living influence, Tolstoi by his book. "The Kingdom of God is Within Us," and Ruskin by his *Unto this Last*".

"His love of truth went on growing. This was so well known that no one had the slightest doubt of Gandhi's sincerity, and even his enemies had absolute faith in his word.

LVI

GANDHI AND JAWAHARLAL

"I could not understand," Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru tells us in his autobiography, "how Gandhi could accept the present social order, based as it is on violence and conflict. India is supposed to be a religious country above everything else. The spectacle of what is called religion, at any rate, organised religion, in India"—he is referring to Hinduism—"has filled me with horror: I have frequently condemned it. I would like to make a clean sweep of it. It stands for blind belief, reaction, dogma, bigotry and superstition, the exploitation of the masses, and the preservation of vested interests." The Pandit comments further that the Hindu claims to spirituality as against the materialism of the West is simply an attempt to hide an inferiority complex. He disliked intensely what he described as Gandhi's religious exploitation of the masses.

eccentric, and not infrequently misunderstood. Those who do not know him think there is some unworthy motive behind, some Oriental "slimness," to account for such profound unworldliness. But those who know him well are ashamed of themselves in his presence.

—J. J. DOKE

LVIII

MONEY AND MAHATMA

MONEY, I think has no charm for him. His compatriots are angry; they say, "He will take nothing. The money we gave him when he went as our deputy to England he brought back to us again. The presents we made him in Natal, he handed over to our public funds. He is poor because he will be poor."

They wonder at him, grow angry at his strange unselfishness, and love of pride and trust. He is one of those outstanding characters, with whom to walk is a liberal education, whom to know is to love.

—JOSEPH J. DOKE

LIX

THE ROWLATT ACT

THE methods of the revolutionary party in Northern and Eastern India had brought about a series of outrages and terrorism which had caused serious concern to the Government of India and to the local governments of the provinces directly affected. In accordance with the advice of a Com-

mittee, presided over by Mr. Justice Rowlatt legislation was introduced and passed giving the executive special powers to deal with the terrorist menace. All political parties in India united in opposition to these measures, and in February 1919 Mr. Gandhi published a manifesto solemnly affirming that in the event of 'these Bills becoming law and until they are withdrawn we shall refuse civilly to obey these laws and such other laws as a Committee to be hereafter appointed may think fit, and we further affirm that in this struggle we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person, or property.' An agitation ensued which reached the extreme limits of violent and unscrupulous misrepresentation. When public excitement was at its highest Mr. Gandhi proclaimed an All-India hartal or closure of shops and general cessation of business in token of public mourning. Violent disorders broke out simultaneously in some of the great cities and at Amritsar led up to the tragedy of the Jallianwala Bagh.

J. G. PRATT

LX

THE BRITISH OPPRESSION -

IT was his sympathy with the oppressed that was the ultimate cause of Gandhi's fight against the English Government also: "The main indictment brought by Gandhi against the English Government," says C. F. Andrews, "may be summed up in one sentence, his accusation against England of oppressing the poor. The starved creatures, the living skeletons which Gandhi met with everywhere in India,

had so stirred him that the thought of helping them gave him no peace day or night."

Andrews also states that Gandhi later, when his Non-co-operation movement was in full swing, made a proposal to the English Government that he would give up the whole undertaking and co-operate with the British authorities if they decided on an energetic campaign against starvation in India.

LXI

THE ENSLAVED INDIANS

I have often and often watched Mahatma Gandhi in the heart of the great South African city of Durban, and seen how he went about in the poor quarters and mixed with the enslaved Indians.....I lived with Gandhi in the Indian 'settlement' in Pretoria and in various other places where the poor Indians, laundrymen, vegetable sellers, and labourers, were treated as pariahs, while all around them the rich were building their palaces. We all know, too, how the Mahatma afterwards indefatigably shared the life of the mill-workers of Ahmedabad, and allied himself to the oppressed peasants of Kaira. He gained his experience of the fate of the poor in the only possible way, by himself living in their midst by the work of his hands.....Mahatma Gandhi is entirely on the side of the poor, and for this reason they instinctively recognized him as their true friend and protector.....

—C. F. ANDREWS

LXII

MAHATMA GANDHI AND SUN YAT SEN

"TWO of them have supremely embodied the

greatest need of our continent, that moral prestige shall ever dominate high political acumen, whatever the diverse ways by which national regenerations are being worked out".

—M. QUO TAI-CHI

LXIII

THE LINGERING DEATH

THE Mahatma has been conviced a thousand times by intimate experience of the extent of this misery; he has repeatedly visited the famine districts and there recognized that "misery and suffering have assumed in India more appalling forms than in any other country in the world". He has given a description of one of these impressions, which he could never forget. It was in Puri. The police superintendent took him to the square before a temple where hundreds of men and women were lying worn out with famine. "The lamp of life was all but extinguished," says Gandhi, "they were moving pictures of despair. You could count every one of their ribs and see every vein. No muscles, no flesh! Withered wrinkled skin on their protruding temple bones; no light in their eyes. They seemed to have no other desire but to die, and they hardly troubled about the handful of rice handed to them.....They took the food, but almost gave you the impression that they could hardly bring themselves to eat it and go on living. This agonizing, slow, and lingering death of men and women, my brothers and sisters, is the most terrible tragedy I have ever witnessed. Their lot is an everlasting forced fast, and when they

occasionally break it with a handful of rice, it almost seems as if they were mocking at our way of life.

LXIV

MAHATMA AND MUSIC

GANDHI'S love of music has very little to do with artistic appreciation proper: for him music and song are only a means to meditation, a form of prayer. The sacred saiten instruments of India, the vina, the tambura, and the sargani, accompany the ragas which have been handed down orally from generation to generation in the course of the centuries. The methods of expression and principles of Indian musical art are entirely different from those of European music: Indian music has neither harmony nor harmonized accompaniment. It consists rather of very peculiar melodic variations of a definite canonic theme. The old classical music of India had originally about four hundred such ragas, but many have been lost in the course of the centuries."

The ragas are played and varied in a manner which is only possible within the twenty-two steps of the Indian scale, and which therefore conceals its surprising and alien charms from our ears. If we wish to imagine what this kind of music is like, we must keep in mind that a raga consists of a few words, such as "Krishna has conquered me," ceaselessly repeated for half an hour, with no single variation completely harmonized with any other".

Rabindranath Tagore once complained of this gloomy and arid characteristic of Gandhi's policy, and

said that he himself had no other alternative during the great political struggle but to devote himself to "inventing new metres". "They are merest nothings," he said, "that are content to be borne away by the current of time, dancing in the sun and laughing as they disappear. But while I play, the whole creation is amused for are not leaves and flowers never-ending experiments in metre? Is not my God the eternal waster of time? He flings stars and planets in the whirlwind of changes. He floats paper boats of ages filled with His fancies on the rushing stream of appearance. When I tease Him and beg Him to allow me to remain His little follower and accept a few trifles of mine as the cargo of His playboat, He smiles, and I trot behind Him clutching the hem of His robe.

"But where am I among the crowd pushed from behind, pressed from all sides? And what is this noise about me? If it is a song, then my own sitar can catch the tune and I join the chorus, for I am a singer. But if it is a shout, then my voice is wrecked and I am lost in bewilderment. I have been trying all these days to find in it a melody, straining my ears, but the idea of non-co-operation, with its mighty volume of sound, does not sing to me, its congregated menace of negation shouts.....

"The bird awakening in the dawn does not think only of food. Its wings respond without weariness to the appeal of the sky, its throat fills with joyous songs to greet the coming day. Humanity has made its appeal to us; let the deepest part of us answer in its real voice!"

Like everything else in Gandhi's life, his judgment of art and its significance is entirely the expression of his knowledge of the misery of the people. Gandhi, to whom, as once to Buddha, the sorrow of human creatures has shown its uncovered face, could no longer spend his emotions and energies on any activity which did not contribute directly to feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and comforting those that mourn.

LXV

SENSE OF HUMOUR

ONE of the things that delighted many English people was the discovery that the great Mahatma had the same sense of humour and laughed at the same things as ourselves. I had the honour of driving him a little way in my car. On the way he asked me about my honorary degree. What is this D. D. that you have? he said. I explained that it was the degree of a Doctor of Divinity, bestowed on me (*honoris causa*) by Glasgow University 'Ah', he said, 'so you know all about divinity'!

—MISS MAUDE ROYDEN

